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THE COMING OF THE WAR

1914

VOLUME II

THE
COMING OF THE WAR
1914

VOLUME II

BY

BERNADOTTE E. SCHMITT
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CHAPTER XII

LOCALIZATION OR MEDIATION?

The refusal of Austria-Hungary to consider the Serbian reply satisfactory, the rupture of diplomatic relations, the mobilization of the Serbian army and of half the Austro-Hungarian army, the wild enthusiasm for war manifested in Vienna and Budapest*—these events of Saturday, 25 July, brought hostilities between Austria-Hungary and Serbia appreciably nearer. From the point of view of the Central Powers the question was whether Russia could be argued or bluffed into tolerating an invasion of Serbia. From the point of view of the Entente Powers the essential thing was to try to arrange a compromise before the Austro-Hungarian forces actually invaded Serbia. In essence it came to this: the Triple Entente was willing to accept a diplomatic humiliation of Serbia, whereas the Central Powers insisted on a military chastisement which was intended to eliminate Serbia as a factor of political power in the Balkans. Tactically speaking, the Central Powers invented the formula that the war should be 'localized,' while the Entente Powers put forward the idea of mediation. The conflict between these two conceptions, which was formally joined on 26 July and lasted until 28 July, constituted the second act of the mighty drama.

'Localization'

The Central Powers were the first to take the field. Count Berchtold had assured Prince Kudachev, the Russian chargé, on 24 July that Austria-Hungary cherished no territorial ambitions to be realized at the expense of Serbia.† The next day he addressed a long despatch to Count Szápáry for an explanation with M. Sazonov, who had shown himself most suspicious

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* Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 25 July; Max Müller to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 135, 152.

† See above, I, 528.

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of Austrian intentions, especially of "devouring" Serbia.* The despatch was full of fair words:

> Territorially the Monarchy is saturated and does not wish to possess itself of any portion of Serbia. If we are forced to go to war with Serbia it will not be a war for territorial gain but as a means of self-defense and existence.

The Monarchy was not animated by hostility to Orthodox Slavdom: witness its "normal and even neighborly relations" with Montenegro. In general,

> We have always been prepared to consider the great political interests of Russia, which are comprehensible, in making our own political plans, and we have always hoped that the identic conservative, monarchical and dynastic interests of the three Empires would not fail to have a beneficial effect on their political relations.

But Count Berchtold made a veiled threat. M. Sazonov was to be told that

> although we certainly are not striving for territorial gain and do not think of touching the sovereignty of Serbia in any way, we shall, on the other hand, go to the limit to enforce our demands and shall not draw back before the possibility of European complications.

The Austrian minister also assumed, he said, that the German ambassador in St. Petersburg would have been instructed to make clear that "in the event of a conflict with Russia, Austria-Hungary would not stand alone."†

So Russia was to be threatened into submission. Count Berchtold was in so confident a mood that the next morning (26 July) he telegraphed to Count Szápáry not to speak of Austria-Hungary's territorial disinterestedness to either M. Sazonov or the Italian ambassador to Russia!‡ It was not until late the next day that any such communication was authorized, after the Emperor had expressly ordered it,* and even then "without any binding engagement."

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* See above, I, 496. Szápáry's telegram of 24 July (A II 19) was received in Vienna at 9 A. M. on 25 July.

† Berchtold to Szápáry, 25 July; A II 42.

‡ Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 26 July, 7.40 A. M.; A II 40, 1.

German policy was much more complicated, for it had two distinct angles. Not only did it aim to impose a certain point of view on the Entente Powers, but, with a view to accomplishing this purpose more easily, it also endeavored to bring about certain action on the part of Austria-Hungary. These two directions were followed simultaneously, but, for the sake of clarity, they will be examined separately.

The German Government had from the beginning urged upon its ally the necessity of prompt action against Serbia. But the Cabinet of Vienna, it will be remembered, had explained its intention of proceeding systematically, step by step: diplomatic rupture, mobilization, declaration of war, the last-named step to follow upon the completion of mobilization.† This had produced a bad impression in Berlin, and the irritation of the German foreign office had been made known to Count Szögyény. As he reported it to Vienna,

> It is taken for granted here that an unsatisfactory answer on the part of Serbia will be followed immediately by our declaration of war, *as well as* by military operations.
>
> People here consider every delay in beginning military operations as involving the danger of intervention by other Powers. We are urgently advised to go ahead at once and present the world with a *fait accompli.*‡

This message was received in Vienna on the evening of 25 July. The pressure of the German Government placed Count Berchtold in a dilemma, for, whatever his personal desires were, his hands were tied by the ministerial decision of 19 July. He therefore sent for General Conrad, who appeared while Herr von Tschirschky was with Count Berchtold. The minister read aloud Count Szögyény's telegram to his visitors. A discussion followed which the German ambassador reported thus:

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* Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 27 July, 10.20 P. M.; A II 75, 1. According to Fraknói, p. 45, Francis Joseph insisted on the communication, after he had seen from Szápáry's reports that the issue had been raised.

† See above, I, 524–526.

‡ Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; A II 32.

> I warmly supported our [German] point of view, which was fully shared by Count Berchtold, to the chief of the general staff. Baron von Hötzendorf [*i. e.,* Conrad] explained that beginning the campaign with insufficient forces must above all things be avoided. The Hungarian corps along the northern frontier of Serbia would indeed be ready to move within a short time. But the Austrian contingents along the western frontier of Serbia would, owing to the lack of sufficient means of communication, require a longer time to bring up, and it would be absolutely necessary to wait for that long. He was counting on being able to begin the general advance about 12 August. For the rest, a formal declaration of war would probably be superfluous, since, as he was assuming with certainty, hostile inroads by Serbia across the Bosnian frontier would follow in the next few days.*

General Conrad, in short, refused to follow the German advice and disorganize his carefully laid plans, and Count Berchtold had to refrain from giving any assurances to Herr von Tschirschky that he would take the course advised by Germany.

The Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, however, was evidently sensitive to the pressure put upon him, for after the conversation with the German ambassador, he spoke privately with the chief of staff, and the following conversation took place:

> BERCHTOLD: We should like to issue the declaration of war against Serbia as soon as possible, in order to avoid other influences [*damit verschiedene Einflüsse aufhören*]. When do *you* wish for the declaration?
>
> CONRAD: Only when we are so far along that the beginning of operations could follow—about 12 August.
>
> BERCHTOLD: The diplomatic situation will not hold so long. . . .
>
> CONRAD: The matter is not so urgent but that we can wait a couple of days.

---

* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 213.

In the end, it was agreed that the declaration should be postponed, but if it became necessary for diplomatic reasons, the general should be summoned.

On the next day Count Hoyos visited the general to ask his consent to the declaration of war. Conrad consented, "in so far as it appears necessary from the diplomatic standpoint." Inasmuch as Count Hoyos said that "no decision appears to have been reached yet in Russia," the diplomatic standpoint must have been that of Germany.* Count Berchtold was then able to inform the German ambassador that war would be declared on the next day, or on the day following, "principally in order to forestall any attempt at mediation."† But when he confirmed this to his ambassador in Berlin in a telegram which, he explained, was in answer to Count Szögyény's message reporting the irritation in Berlin over the delay in beginning action,‡ Count Berchtold said:

> Beginning of military operations must, however, be postponed until the completion of the concentration, so that the decisive blow can then be dealt with full force. A certain time will still be necessary for this, because the experience of recent years has taught us not to begin military measures on a large scale until it is certain that it will actually come to war.
>
> Your Excellency will inform Herr von Jagow accordingly, with the request that it be kept strictly secret.§

It could not be more clearly stated that in spite of its military uselessness at the moment, the declaration of war would be issued in order to please the German Government.

The second aspect of German policy from the evening of 25 July can now be properly understood. Having urged its ally to begin military operations against Serbia as soon as possible, the German Government had to inaugurate a diplomatic offensive against the Powers of the Triple Entente in order to stave off their protests and proposals for mediation until Austria-Hungary could present them with the *fait accompli* of a war with Serbia. This it proceeded to do with great energy, and its energy became all the greater as it realized that its strategy might be compromised by the hesitation of the Cabinet of Vienna to act before its preparations were complete.

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* Conrad, IV, 131–132.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 257. Hoyos, in transmitting to Ischl the draft of a proclamation to be issued by Francis Joseph, said: "The minister would like to issue the declaration of war on Tuesday. . . . He wishes to accelerate this matter and obviate a possible intervention of third Powers or other incidents." Hoyos to Schiessl, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,772.

‡ Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; A II 32. See above, p. 3.

§ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 27 July; A II 69.

Late on Saturday afternoon, 25 July, two disturbing telegrams were received from Prince Lichnowsky, who had just seen Sir Edward Grey. It was true, the ambassador reported, that Grey drew "a sharp distinction between an Austro-Serbian and an Austro-Russian quarrel" and that "into the first he would not mix, as it did not concern him." But he refused to go into the details of the Austrian note, made clear that he "counts with certainty on the Austrian mobilization being followed by that of Russia," and left no doubt that "in the circumstances, an Austro-Russian conflict meant a world war." The British foreign secretary also said that "European complications were not a matter of indifference to Great Britain, although she was *not committed by any kind of binding agreements.*" The ambassador felt it his duty, therefore, to express the conviction that

> the British Government will endeavor to manifest toward us a friendly and as impartial as possible an attitude just so long as it believes in our honest desire for peace and in our efforts to co-operate with England, hand in hand, to avert the European storm which is threatening.*

He begged the chancellor not to decline the British proposal for mediation *à quatre*. As he put it in a private message to Herr von Jagow:

> I see in it the only possibility of avoiding a world war, in which there would be for us everything to lose and nothing to

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 180.

gain. If we refuse, Grey will not bestir himself again. . . . Our refusal would cause great irritation here, and if France is drawn in, I do not believe that England could remain indifferent.*

Ostensibly, these warnings made some impression on Herr von Bethmann, for late the same evening he replied that Germany "was ready, with the other Great Powers, to inaugurate mediation between Austria and Russia." But his further statement that Grey's distinction between the Austro-Serbian and the Austro-Russian disputes was "entirely appropriate" shows that he was trying to impose the German view on the British foreign secretary. From the very first Sir Edward Grey had represented the distinction as academic,† and precisely because he saw no prospect of the issue being confined to Austria-Hungary and Serbia, he had proposed mediation between Austria-Hungary and Russia by the four disinterested Powers.

The point of the British proposal was that the mediation of the Powers should be disinterested. The German chancellor in his telegram of acceptance,‡ rendered lip-homage to this idea. But since the German Government had that same day urged Vienna to proceed immediately to military operations against Serbia, honest mediation on its part was out of the question. So while professing to fall in with the British desire for a compromise between Austria-Hungary and Russia, Herr von Bethmann proceeded actually to threaten Russia and to demand that Russia's friends withhold their support.

Early on 26 July the news reached Berlin that Russian military circles were "in the throes of great excitement over Austria's procedure," which led the German Emperor's aide-de-camp at the Tsar's court, General von Chelius, to think that "all preparations are being made for mobilization against Austria."* The chancellor thereupon telegraphed to St. Petersburg:

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram for Jagow, 25 July; G 179.

† It must be said that Lichnowsky did not make Grey's position entirely clear until 27 July, when he said: "It is true that the minister draws a sharp distinction between the Austro-Serbian and the Austro-Russian conflicts; that is to say, he did not want to mix in the Austro-Serbian so long as it did not develop into an Austro-Russian conflict. But now he finds himself compelled to take a hand because it threatens to develop into an Austro-Russian and therefore into a European conflict. The Austro-Russian conflict accordingly cannot be separated from the Austro-Serbian, as the former is based on the latter, and the minister has been speaking with me in this sense. An understanding between Austria and Russia depends on the settlement of the Austro-Serbian quarrel." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 266.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 25 July; G 192.

> Since Count Berchtold has stated to Russia that Austria contemplates no territorial acquisitions in Serbia, but only wishes to bring about quiet, maintenance of European peace depends solely on Russia. . . . We trust that she will take no step which will seriously endanger the peace of Europe.†

Later in the day, this was reinforced by a second telegram, which was a warning, or a threat, according to the point of view:

> Preparatory military measures on the part of Russia aimed in any way at us would compel us to take military measures for our own protection, which would have to consist in the mobilization of the army. Mobilization, however, would mean war.

Russia was therefore asked to accept the Austro-Hungarian assurances of territorial disinterestedness as the basis of an agreement for localizing the war.* "Mobilization means war": although Russia was not specifically forbidden to use her military power as a means of exerting pressure on Austria-Hungary, the communication was a veiled threat, for it committed the German Government to a course from which there was no retreat.

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 194. It was the practise of the German and Russian Emperors to attach special military representatives to the person of the other, who were used to convey the letters of the two sovereigns to each other and in general as intermediaries in times of difficulty. The Tsar's aide at the court of William II, General Tatishchev, happened to be in St. Petersburg at the moment the crisis broke out. In the reports from Russia, it is necessary to distinguish carefully between those of General von Chelius, who reflected the atmosphere of the court, and those of the military attaché, Major von Eggeling, who was in contact with Russian military circles. The impressions of the two officers were by no means always identical.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 26 July, 1.35 P. M.; G 198. German knowledge of Berchtold's statement consisted only, so far as the documents show, of what Tschirschky had reported of Berchtold's conversation with Kudachev. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 24 July; G 155. Berlin does not appear to have known that Szápáry had been forbidden to assure Sazonov of Austria's disinterestedness. As Hoyos—so far as we know—had spoken only of the "partition of Serbia," without hinting at Austrian territorial gains, it is quite possible that the German Government believed that Berchtold meant what he had said to Kudachev. Whether it knew of the reservations about "rectifications of frontier" (see above, I, 365) does not appear from the record.

As part of the original plan of forcing Russia to acquiesce in the action against Serbia, an effort was also made to deprive her of the diplomatic support of her Entente associates. Telegrams were sent to London and Paris requesting the British and French Governments to use their influence at St. Petersburg in favor of moderation and the localization of the conflict.† Sir Edward Grey was told of Russian military preparations "which would point toward mobilization against us,"‡ and the French Government was asked to believe that Germany was "at one with it in the desire for the maintenance of the peace of Europe."* Finally, since the chief of the general staff deemed it "urgently necessary that Italy be held fast to the Triple Alliance," Vienna was asked to come to an agreement with Rome and not to evade this by "questionable interpretations of the treaty."† If possible, not an opening was to be left to Russian diplomacy for organizing a diplomatic counter-offensive.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 26 July; G 219. As the documents stand, this telegram appears to be an answer to a telegram from Pourtalès (G 213) transmitting a report of the military attaché: "Consider it certain that mobilization has been ordered for Kiev and Odessa. Warsaw and Moscow doubtful, but the other [districts] probably not yet." But as this telegram was received at 7.01 P. M., and the chancellor's telegram, which is of some length, was sent at 7.15 P. M., it seems improbable that the one message could have been decoded and the other coded within fourteen minutes. It is possible, of course, that the chancellor's telegram had already been drafted, for it is phrased in general terms, and kept in readiness to despatch as soon as reports of Russian mobilization came in. As a matter of fact, the report of the military attaché was not correct (see below, p. 32), any more than was all that the British military attaché in Vienna reported to London. It was almost inevitable that the reports of military and naval attachés should be inaccurate, for military and naval information was jealously guarded; the reports of attachés and secret agents, however, often exercised considerable influence on the governments to which they were sent.

† Late on the preceding day Bethmann had informed the Emperor that "Paris and London are working zealously to localize the conflict." Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 25 July, 10.45 P. M.; G 191. He was not justified in making such an assertion, and his telegrams to Paris and London the next day prove that he did not believe it; he was doubtless trying to reassure his master. The next day he telegraphed that "as long as Russia undertakes no hostile action, I think that our attitude must be calm and aimed at localization." Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 26 July, 1 P. M.; G 197. On this William noted: "Calmness is the first duty of a citizen! Keep calm—only keep calm! But a calm mobilization is something new, indeed."

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, "urgent"; G 199. Bethmann said that "the calling to the colors of several annual drafts of reserves is imminent." "The general staff," so the Austrian ambassador learned, "has received a report, which is not considered sure, that four classes of Russian reservists have been called up." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 49. The report is not included in the list for 26 July given in *Russlands Mobilmachung für den Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1919), p. 13.

FRANCE AND GERMANY, 26–27 JULY

Obviously the success of the Austro-German plans would be brought much nearer if Russia could be isolated or made to doubt the loyalty of her ally. We have already seen what was in the mind of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg some days before the presentation of the Austro-Hungarian note:

> We have reasons for assuming and are bound to wish [he wrote] that France, which is burdened at the moment with all sorts of troubles, will do everything that she can to restrain Russia from intervening. . . . If we are successful not only in keeping France quiet but in having Russia admonished to keep the peace, the effect on the Franco-Russian alliance will be very favorable for us.‡

Accordingly for several days after the Austro-Serbian rupture the spear-point of the German diplomatic offensive was directed against France. The British ambassador in Paris, strangely enough, appears to have doubted whether France would stand resolutely by her ally, for he wrote to his chief:

> I do not think that if Russia pick[s] a quarrel with Austria over the Austro-Servian difficulty public opinion in France would be in favour of backing up Russia in so bad a cause.
>
> Consequently the French Government will probably advise

---

* Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, 26 July; G 200.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 26 July; G 202. The Italian minister in Bucharest, Baron Fasciotti, talked "very excitedly" about the Austrian attitude toward Serbia. In the event of war, "Russia would not be able to look on calmly"; "Italy," he said, "found herself at the moment not in a position financially to go to war." Waldburg to Bethmann-Hollweg, 20 July, received 25 July; G 177. San Giuliano was requested to "send the minister instructions for his proper behavior." Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 26 July; G 227.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Roedern, 16 July; G 58.

> the Russian Government to moderate any excessive zeal that they may be inclined to display to protect their Servian client.*

And he succeeded in forcing from the acting foreign minister an admission, "but not as Minister, that it would be difficult to bring French public opinion to fighting point in such a case as present one."† The Wilhelmstrasse, for its part, was doubtless encouraged by the report of its ambassador that "our declaration concerning localization of the conflict has made a great impression."‡

This language of Baron von Schoen calls for remark. Taken in connection with his report of 24 July,§ it would be bound to give the German foreign office an optimistic impression of the situation in Paris, although we have seen that his *démarche* was actually resented by the Quai d'Orsay. Now it is striking to observe that whereas in the great majority of cases in which the documents of July, 1914, record the version of both parties to a conversation the accounts tally very well indeed, the reports of the acting French foreign minister and the German ambassador in Paris of what they said to each other on 26 and 27 July create very different impressions. M. Bienvenu-Martin, the veriest novice in diplomacy, made a number of dangerous private admissions, and these Baron von Schoen reported to Berlin; with the result that the German Government must have got a wrong notion of the probable attitude of France.

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* Bertie to Grey, private, 25 July; B 134. The ambassador had no sympathy with the Russian position. "It seems incredible that the Russian Government should plunge Europe into war in order to make themselves the protectors of the Servians. Unless the Austrian Government had proofs of the complicity of the Servian officials in the plot to murder the Archduke they could not have addressed to the Servian Government the stringent terms which the Austrian Note contained. Russia comes forward as the protectress of Servia; by what title except on the exploded pretension that she is, by right, the protectress of all Slavs? What rubbish! And she will expect, if she adhere to her present attitude, France and England to support her in arms. Public opinion in England would never sanction such a policy, but unfortunately we might be dragged into a war through reverses to French arms and the necessity to prevent the annihilation of France." *The Diary of Lord Bertie of Thame, 1914–1918* (London, 1925), entry of 26 July, 1914, I, 1. This point of view led the ambassador, as will be seen, to advise his government to exert pressure on France for the purpose of restraining Russia. But Bertie believed thoroughly in the necessity of England's standing by France if a general war developed.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 129.

‡ Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 169.

§ G 154. See above, I, 489.

On the receipt of Herr von Bethmann's telegram of 26 July,* Baron von Schoen went to see M. Bienvenu-Martin, to repeat the assurance that Austria-Hungary intended only "to insure her own tranquillity and to take police measures," and to say that Germany "felt herself identified with France in the ardent desire that peace may be maintained." According to the ambassador, the minister replied that "personally he would be quite willing to have St. Petersburg calmed down"; in his own record of the conversation, the minister said that

> Russia was moderate, that she had not committed any act which allowed any doubt as to her moderation, and that we [the French Government] were in agreement with her in seeking a peaceful solution of the dispute. It therefore appeared to us that Germany on her side ought to act at Vienna, where her action would certainly be effective.

This last suggestion Schoen reported as Bienvenu-Martin's "personal idea," which, it should be noted, he rejected as "not compatible" with the German view. The Frenchman then suggested mediation at Vienna and St. Petersburg by the four other less interested Powers, which the German did not mention at all. According to Schoen, Bienvenu-Martin admitted that the Powers were not "legally" competent to judge the conduct of Serbia, and that Austria "could not submit to a European areopagus."† In the end the French minister declined the German proposal: "He could not as yet give me a formal declaration in the name of the French Government about the form of intervention [*Modus der Einwirkung*], for he would first have to get in touch with the president of the council," so Schoen telegraphed to Berlin, whereas Bienvenu-Martin says he told him that "I did not feel myself in a position to take any action at St. Petersburg alone."‡

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* See above, p. 9.

† Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 55.

‡ Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 235. Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 26 July; F 56. Cf. also Sevastopulo to Sazonov, telegram, 26 July; Romberg, pp. 17–18.

How complete was the conflict of positions can be judged by the German ambassador's next move. In the evening he returned to the Quai d'Orsay to propose the issue of a communiqué stating that he and the foreign minister, "acting in an identical spirit of peaceful co-operation" [*sentiment de solidarité pacifique*], had "examined the means which might be employed to maintain general peace." The acting political director, M. Berthelot, told him frankly that, in view of Germany's "negative attitude," such a communiqué would "give a false security to French opinion," and privately, he used much stronger language:

> Germany's attitude was inexplicable if she did not aim at war.* . . . The slightest advice given to Vienna would put an end to the nightmare which weighed upon Europe. . . . From the day when Austrian troops crossed the Serbian frontier, we should be faced by an act which would without doubt oblige the Cabinet of St. Petersburg to intervene and would involve the danger of precipitating a war which Germany declares that she wishes to avoid.

The French diplomatist therefore questioned the advisability of issuing a note to the press, even though the ambassador said that "he did not personally regard it as out of the question that the Cabinet of Vienna would be amenable to moderating suggestions if not made under pressure."† Baron von Schoen was evidently conscious of his rebuff, for he made only a brief report of the incident to Berlin.‡

But he was not yet discouraged. For a communiqué was issued after all, in spite of M. Berthelot's opposition, in order to check a chauvinistic movement in the press;* but it was given a "deliberately colorless" phrasing:

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* Berthelot told the Russian chargé, however, that in his opinion Germany and Austria "are striving for a brilliant diplomatic victory, but do not desire war unconditionally, though in the last analysis they will not shrink from it." Sevastopulo to Sazonov, telegram, 26 July; R, 1925 38. He thought the manœuvre "intended to intimidate France."

† Berthelot's memorandum, 26 July; F 57. Schoen, *Erlebtes*, p. 168. A communication from the French embassy in London to the foreign office on 27 July (B 174) seems to disprove Schoen's statement that the German proposal for localization was at first accepted by Bienvenu-Martin and that this fact was later suppressed.

‡ "I have gained the distinct impression that Viviani's answer will be that he will be willing to exert a pacifying influence at St. Petersburg if we are ready, now that Serbia has agreed to almost all the demands, to counsel moderation in Vienna." Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 241.

> The German ambassador and the acting president of the council have had a fresh conversation, in the course of which they considered what measures might be taken by the Powers for the maintenance of peace.†

Baron von Schoen thereupon wrote privately to M. Berthelot reaffirming the German desire for solidarity with France,‡ and in the afternoon (27 July) visited the under-secretary of the foreign office, M. Abel Ferry, in order once more to urge counsels of moderation in St. Petersburg. When told that "it would be more to the point to leave intervention to the four Powers" not immediately concerned, the ambassador "personally agreed";§ according to his own account, he "went so far as to offer at the same time to urge [his] government to act with France in Vienna and St. Petersburg."‖ But he did not inform Berlin of this, doubtless because he knew that Berlin would not hear of it; instead he reported himself as having stated that "every semblance of pressure on Vienna as well as any formal conference would have to be avoided." On such terms no progress could be made.

Nevertheless, Baron von Schoen made one more attempt. On the morning of 28 July he visited M. Bienvenu-Martin "to talk over the situation and the methods to be employed to avoid action that would be irreparable."* Once more the usual comedy was played. The ambassador reaffirmed that "Germany only wishes to act with France for the maintenance of peace," and objected only to the form of mediation; the minister replied that the question of form could be easily arranged and that "the first stage of mediation must be to counsel Austria to moderation in her military operations." Schoen said that "Germany declined to exercise pressure on Austria," and there the matter ended.†

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* Bertie to Grey, 27 July; B 193. Bertie approved of Schoen's desire for some mention of "solidarity" (Bertie to Grey, private, 27 July; B 192), and advised Grey "to urge French Government to issue notice suggested by German Ambassador" (Bertie to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 193). Grey, however, replied: "I suppose French reluctance is due to desire to avoid appearance of being detached from Russia, and I cannot urge them to risk that." Grey to Bertie, telegram, 28 July; B 204. Grey understood the situation perfectly.

† Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 62.

‡ At the Quai d'Orsay his letter was interpreted as "an attempt to compromise France with Russia . . . and to mask military action by Austria in Serbia." Actually on this very day, Jagow expressed to Szögyény his regret that Austria must postpone her military operations until 12 August. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 67.

§ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 22; R, 1925 58. The French documents contain no account of this conversation; Izvolski's version came of course from the Quai d'Orsay.

‖ Schoen, p. 170.

Thus, in spite of five attempts, the German ambassador completely failed to secure from the French Government any expression of "solidarity." Baron von Schoen was respected in Paris as an honest man, and his personal desire to see peace maintained was not doubted.‡ But his flitting from one French official to another, his eagerness to influence the press, and the divergence between his private opinions and his official instructions created the deepest suspicion at the Quai d'Orsay. The acting foreign minister was convinced, so Izvolski was told, that

> these steps on the part of Germany are taken with the evident object of alienating Russia and France, of inducing the French Government to make representations at St. Petersburg, and of thus compromising our ally in our eyes; and finally, in the event of war, of throwing the responsibility not on Germany, who is ostensibly making every effort to maintain peace, but on Russia and France.§

That this was a correct analysis, the German documents themselves prove, and from their point of view, the French were quite right in not walking into what they could only regard as a German trap. If Germany would not restrain her ally, neither would they exert pressure on theirs. Perhaps no incident of the crisis illustrates so vividly the working of the system of alliances.

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* At this very hour (although Schoen did not know it) Austria, yielding to German pressure, was declaring war on Serbia.

† Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 28 July; F 78. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 310. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 28 July; Romberg, p. 26; R, 1925 78.

‡ Poincaré, IV, 343.

§ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R 35.

The Russian ambassador, who returned to Paris on 27 July, was delighted.* "I was surprised," he telegraphed to St. Petersburg, "at the correct understanding of the situation manifested by the acting minister and his assistant, and to see how firm and tranquil they were in their determination to extend to us their fullest support and to avoid the slightest appearance of any lack of unity between us."† The German ambassador was also under no illusion. "The prejudice in French responsible quarters was too strong to be uprooted," he wrote after the war;‡ and he contented himself with sending to Berlin rather summary reports of his conversations. By 28 July the German Government could not doubt that France was immovable.

The Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Paris did not fare better than his German colleague. After seeing M. Berthelot, who "expressed much surprise that [the Serbian] answer, which amounted to complete capitulation, had not been accepted," Count Szécsen warned his government that "our intransigent attitude will make a very bad impression here."§ M. Bienvenu-Martin, he said, "seemed to assume that the beginning of hostilities against Serbia must necessarily be followed by a general war." When the ambassador, according to his instructions,|| hinted that "energetic measures" [*schärfsten Mitteln*] might have to be employed,—"an ultimatum, a declaration of

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* "Iswolsky is expected back here to-day or to-morrow and he is not an element of peace," wrote Bertie to Grey on 27 July (B 192). At dinner that evening he told the counsellor of the British embassy that "to allow Austria a free hand with Servia would be as deep a humiliation for Russia as that which he himself had had to accept in 1909; he had no choice then, as Russia was not in a position to fight, but things were very different now." He expressed the opinion that "war is inevitable, and by fault of England," who had refused to declare her solidarity with Russia and France. Bertie to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 216.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 23; R, 1925 58.

‡ Schoen, p. 170.

§ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 54. According to Berthelot, Szécsen "did not conceal his surprise that [the Serbian reply] had failed to satisfy Giesl." Sevastopulo to Sazonov, 26 July; R 27.

|| Berchtold to Szécsen, telegram, 26 July; A II 62.

war, or a crossing of the frontier,"—the minister urged that there should be nothing more than an ultimatum which Serbia could accept, and laid on Austria the responsibility for precipitating a war "the limits of which it was impossible to foresee." Count Szécsen did not hesitate to inform Count Berchtold that "our attitude in the face of Serbia's answer causes the belief to spread we desire war at all costs," and that when MM. Poincaré and Izvolski had returned, "we shall have to listen to sharper words."* The effort of the German Government to induce France to show herself detached from Russia had completely failed, and that too before the issuance of the Austrian declaration of war against Serbia.

Evidence of the impression produced in responsible French quarters by the forcing of the Serbian crisis is afforded by the measures taken by the military authorities. At 10.15 P. M. on 25 July—presumably, that is, after the Austro-Serbian rupture had become known—general officers and corps commanders absent on leave were recalled to their posts. During the morning of 26 July the French intelligence service reported that German regiments were putting on field uniforms and that the forts at Metz were being occupied.† The French minister of war, M. (later General) Messimy, thereupon suspended the movements of troops and all further leaves of absence. At 4 P. M. a report came that German officers were being recalled from leave;‡ at 4.30 P. M. all French officers on leave were recalled. When the news was received that the German railways had been warned to prepare for the transport of troops, a similar notice was sent to the French lines.* In addition, all troops of the five frontier corps were ordered back to barracks, military commanders were instructed to apply the *"dispositif restreint de sécurité"* (though without use of the military), and the press was asked not to refer to military matters. Finally, the 19th corps, stationed in Algeria, was authorized to call up local reservists.

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* Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 70. Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 75. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 23; R, 1925 59. In R 37 the "energetic measures" are mentioned as "crossing of the Serbian frontier, or an ultimatum, or even a declaration of war." F 75 gives them in the correct order.

† German writers generally contest the accuracy of the information furnished by the French intelligence service and cite the records of the Prussian war ministry and the German general staff as proof that their military measures were posterior to those of France. But these post-war corrections do not affect the fact that the reports received in July, 1914, were accepted at the time as correct and caused certain steps to be taken. On both sides commanders of frontier corps might easily take local measures of precaution which, of course, lent themselves to exaggerated reports. It is therefore important to record what each war office believed the other side to be doing and to indicate the steps taken on the basis of the supposed facts.

‡ The official order for this was issued on 29 July. The French consul in Basel, however, heard that on 23 July German officers on leave in his district were ordered to return to Germany. Farges to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 60.

"The next day, the 27th," recounts General Messimy, "was very bad."

> From all points of the frontier information reached me which proved Germany's preparations for war: arming and occupation of the forts at Metz; recall of soldiers on leave; calling up of numerous reservists; preparations for mobilization [*opérations de mobilisation*]; the return to Germany *en masse* of all her nationals residing abroad and especially in Belgium. Thus the 20th corps telegraphed me at 12.10 A. M.: "Heavy artillery has occupied the Kaiserin, Kronprinz and Lothringen forts; the regiments have received their war equipment." A very reliable Alsatian, who made a special trip to Belfort, brought the news that on Friday night numerous soldiers had been summoned to the recruiting office at Mülhausen to work on mobilization. At Diedenhofen (Thionville) the four last classes were ordered to hold themselves at the disposition of the *Kommandantur* at any hour.†

Other information was that motor-car owners in Baden had been ordered to be prepared to hand over their cars within two days after the receipt of a new order, that requisitions had begun, and that the covering troops had been sent to their stations on the frontier.‡

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* The German order appears to have referred only to the transport of troops absent from their garrisons. Graf M. Montgelas, "Das französische Generalstabswerk," in *KSF*, V, 1211 (December, 1927).

† Count Montgelas, *loc. cit.*, denies that a German *Kommandantur* had the right to call up reservists. The report of the occupation of the forts of Metz was, however, correct; the corps commander reported his action to Berlin on 27 July. *Der Weltkrieg* [German official history] (Berlin, 1925), I, 101, note.

‡ Count Montgelas, *loc. cit.*, p. 1212, asserts that men on leave were not recalled until 29 July, and that as late as 6 P. M. on 30 July permission was refused the commander at Metz to send out the covering troops.

In consequence of these reports of measures being taken in Germany, the French Government ordered the full application of the *dispositif restreint de sécurité* to railways and public buildings (that is, placed them under military guard), and recalled all men on leave. Also the resident-general in Morocco was asked to send as many troops as possible and as soon as possible to France.* The minister of war also sought—according to his post-war recollections—to put himself in touch with the Russian general staff: "I insisted with all my power that . . . the armies of the Tsar should take the offensive in East Prussia as soon as possible."†

Do these measures taken by the French war office convict the French Government of a 'will to war' or a determination to have it? Not necessarily, any more than the steps ascribed to Germany by the French intelligence service prove that the German Government was deliberately planning to start the avalanche. What the preparations do show is that the French war office regarded the situation as very serious, that it assumed France would be involved if war came, and that it was determined to be as ready for war as was possible without interference with the routine of civil life.‡ Whether the Germans anticipated the French in their preparatory measures, as the latter claim, or *vice versa,* as the Germans contend, is a question that can hardly be answered until *all* the military records of both Powers are made available. As a matter of fact, once either government had made up its mind to fight rather than accept diplomatic defeat at the hands of the other, the details of military preparations are of small consequence.

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* According to General Messimy, the Moroccan division played a decisive part in the first battle of the Marne.

† The last three paragraphs are based on the French official history of the war, *Les armées françaises dans la grande Guerre*, I, 72–73, and Recouly, "Recit de M. Messimy," in *Les heures tragiques d'avant-guerre*, pp. 63–71. There is no confirmation of Messimy's last statement in published documents.

‡ The Germans have published a letter from an unidentified French officer to the commander of the 120th infantry, dated 28 July, in which he says: "Chances of war 7/10. The Austrian ambassador notified the Quai d'Orsay this morning that the Austro-Hungarian troops had entered Serbia this morning. On the other hand, Russia yesterday notified Berlin *in the most emphatic manner* that she was mobilizing 14 corps and that she would mobilize the other 30 if Germany made the least movement *toward either frontier*. Things look very well for us, since it is Russia who is mobilizing first and is thereby gaining time and will be as ready as anybody else. She needs 22 days. At the ministry they are delighted; General Joffre is smiling, for the first 7 measures of the *temps du tension* have been taken without a hitch and without an indiscretion. The journalists are keeping the secret as they promised. Nobody has made any objection, except to express the fear that not enough has been done. . . . This evening all *the corps have returned* to their mobilization depots; the camps are empty; there were more than 100 extra *trains* yesterday on the Eastern Railway; not a slip. . . . The only serious hope for peace is that Serbia can hold out against the rather small forces which Austria can send against her, since Russia compels her to guard her eastern frontier; on the other

Just as the language of the French Government became firmer, so the tone of the French press grew sterner as the Austro-German attitude unfolded itself. On 26 July, when the news of the Austro-Serbian rupture was published, a few papers expressed the hope that Germany and France might restrain their respective allies, but the general sentiment was expressed by the *Matin* when it said:

> Russia cannot allow Austria to achieve the ruin of the Slavic nations of which she has declared herself the protector. . . . The day that Russia enters on the scene, the clauses of the Triple Alliance will come into play, Germany will have to come to the aid of her ally, and then it will be the turn of France to fulfil her engagements.

By the next day, the conviction was general that "the decision as to war or peace now depends chiefly on Berlin."* Even the Socialist *Humanité* was asking why, if Germany desired France to restrain Russia, she "should not, on her part, act on her ally Austria." That evening there were, it is true, demonstrations against war, and the following day the *Humanité* published a flaming appeal calling on the government to restrain Russia. But no other paper supported this demand. French opinion

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hand, however, I know that Serbia has not had time to replace her *matériel* and that above all she lacks munitions. Well, it's very uncertain. A move by Wilhelm der Zweite and *ça y est.*" *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, 73. The letter cannot be taken very seriously, for the Russian notification of mobilization was not made in Berlin until 29 July, nor did the Austrian troops enter Serbia on the morning of 28 July. Also, the Russian general staff had promised that the first contacts with the German armies would be made in 15 days. The letter, if genuine, probably reflects the gossip in French military circles, but can hardly pass as an authoritative statement of the official attitude.

* Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 252.

was certainly not chauvinistic, but it had begun, so the Austro-Hungarian ambassador thought, to accustom itself to the idea of war.* Even the revolutionary *Guerre Sociale* did not hesitate to proclaim: "Between imperial Germany and republican France our choice is made. *Vive la France républicaine et socialiste!*" If imperial Germany had pictured to itself a France hopelessly divided by factional strife and irresolute in face of the Humbert report on the state of the army, that was only another of the many psychological blunders committed in July, 1914. According to the British ambassador, there was "no war fever," only "much nervous excitement."† But the feeling was, so the correspondent of the London *Morning Post* averred, "unanimous in declaring that if Germany wants war France is ready and will be loyal both to the letter and spirit of her Alliance."‡

Thus the German chancellor's preconceived picture of French sentiment and policy was instantly proved erroneous. French opinion, from Nationalist to Socialist, had instinctively perceived a challenge in the Austro-German policy and had taken for granted that the challenge must be met, even before the President of the Republic and the head of the government had returned to Paris.§ The excitement aroused by the trial of Madame Caillaux evaporated in the presence of danger abroad, and the "all sorts of troubles" which the German chancellor had pictured to himself were forgotten. The German action had, in fact, produced just the opposite effect of what Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had desired.||

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* Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 56. † Bertie, I, 2–3.

‡ Scott, pp. 191–203.

§ After the war, the French discovered in Metz an order of 27 July "to disturb the French wireless communications in a manner that would not be a violation of peace." On the next day a second note stated that the Eiffel Tower, having sensed the German plan, was trying to reach the *France* by way of Dunkirk, and concluded: "In view of the eventual importance for Russia of the contents of the despatches, this transmission has likewise been blocked." Poincaré, IV, 328. Poincaré complains that the news reaching him and Viviani while at sea was distorted and fragmentary.

|| The Austro-Hungarian ambassador analyzed the situation in France as follows: "Apart from certain nationalist-chauvinistic groups and from military circles which are professionally disposed to war, really no one in France, I think, desires war; but so much has been said in the last few years about the impending unavoidable

RUSSIA'S MOVES, 26–28 JULY

Public opinion in the Russian capital displayed considerable excitement over the news of the Austro-Serbian rupture. On 26 July crowds marched through the streets shouting "Down with Germany!", "Long live Serbia!", "Long live the Russian army!" Hostile demonstrations before the German and Austro-Hungarian embassies were frustrated by the police, but one in front of the Serbian legation was successful and a secretary make a speech. Similar manifestations occurred in Moscow and other cities.*

The press, with one or two exceptions, asserted that Russia must stand firmly by Serbia. The *Novoye Vremya* on 26 July, which ascribed to Austria-Hungary the intention of destroying Serbia, demanded that Russia take up the challenge, and said that the bluff attempted by the Central Powers would not succeed:

> A peaceful outcome is possible only if Germany is not standing at Austria's back, determined to go to war. In that case everything is in vain, and the coming of the European war is no longer to be warded off.

The *Svyet* called for "the immediate mobilization of the Russian army." The *Peterburgsky Kuryer* declared that it was a

war that the population has accustomed itself to this idea and accepts the possibility of a belligerent conflict with resignation. The Viviani cabinet and the majority in the chamber upon which it depends have so many links with socialist circles that it may certainly be said that the government and its majority will assuredly not strive for war. But the alliance with Russia remains the guiding star of every French politician and so people are waiting on the decisions of St. Petersburg, hoping that they will be in favor of peace but in any case firmly decided to fulfil the obligations of the alliance without hesitation and in all respects. . . . There is no doubt, I think, that from the French as well as from the Russian side, Belgrade was advised to go to the farthest limit of submission. Hence there is disillusion because the submission of Serbia which at all events goes very far and amounts to a deep humiliation has not accomplished its purpose. Our refusal to accept the Serbian answer has produced irritation here, partly because this refusal is really not altogether understood, even more because they felt very proud of having brought Serbia so far and now see that the humiliation which was urged on Serbia has still failed of its purpose. . . . The feeling of panic is cleverly nourished by the Russian embassy; Russia's love of peace is naturally pointed out, and it is asserted that the Serbian question is only a hollow excuse which we and Germany are utilizing to conjure up a European conflagration." Szécsen to Berchtold, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,907.

* Buchanan to Grey, 27 July; B 289. Scott, pp. 170–171.

vital interest for Russia to defend the small Slav nations which provided her with a lateral protection against the *Drang nach Osten* on her way to the Dardanelles.* An extra edition of the *Vechernoye Vremya* gave prominence to the views of a "highly authoritative personage," who was supposed to be the French ambassador.† According to him, Russia, having done everything possible to circumscribe the Austro-Serbian conflict, would make no more advances to Vienna. "We stand," he said, "on the eve of great events." The newspaper added that "the measures necessary to prevent any kind of catastrophe had been taken," and that Russia, France, and Great Britain," "acting with complete unanimity," would "proceed hand in hand to the accomplishment of their task."‡ Apparently only two papers in the Russian capital, the *Zemshchina* and the *Ryech,* the latter the organ of the Cadet party, opposed the general view that Russia could not abandon Serbia, and the *Ryech* reflected but a small section of opinion.§

The foreign minister, however, did not allow himself to be excited by public feeling. The German ambassador, who met him on the train from Tsarskoye Selo to St. Petersburg, was surprised by his conciliatory attitude and took advantage of this attitude to suggest that he discuss the ultimatum with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador.|| M. Sazonov, according to Count Pourtalès, "stated with the utmost fervor" that

> nothing lay further from Russia's mind than the desire for war; that on the contrary, she was ready to exhaust every means to avoid it; that a way must absolutely be found.

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* Pourtalès to Bethmann-Hollweg, 26 July; G 288.

† Pourtalès to Bethmann-Hollweg, 26 July; G 289. Paléologue's attitude did not make for moderation. His account of Poincaré's visit (see above, I, 448) leaves the impression that he expected war. On 25 July he told the British ambassador that "French Government would want to know at once whether our fleet was prepared to play part assigned to it by Anglo-French Naval Convention." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 125. He is said to have acted on his own responsibility, without instructions from his government, but the remark is significant.

‡ Pourtalès to Bethmann-Hollweg, 26 July; G 290.

§ It stated that Grey had advised King George "to address the German Emperor directly with a view to bringing about a peaceful settlement of the Austro-Servian dispute." Buchanan to Grey, 26 July; B 289. There is no trace of any such move by Grey.

|| Pourtalès, *Am Scheidewege zwischen Krieg und Frieden,* p. 20.

He therefore "urgently" begged for Germany's assistance "to persuade the Cabinet of Vienna to modify some of the points" of its ultimatum.*

In the course of the day, M. Sazonov addressed the same appeal to Austria's other ally. In a telegram to Rome he said that

> Italy might play a part of the first importance in favor of preserving peace, by bringing the necessary influence to bear on Austria, and by adopting a definitely unfavorable attitude toward the dispute on the ground that it could not be localized.†

Just as Germany was trying to detach France and Great Britain from Russia, so Russia was endeavoring to separate Germany and Italy from Austria-Hungary.

Such manœuvres were part of the diplomatic stock in trade. What really counted, as a step to preserve peace, was M. Sazonov's overture to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador, whom he saw in the latter part of the day. He confided to Count Szápáry that "he had no heart for the Balkan Slavs," who "were a heavy burden for Russia." Austria's desire to put an end to the agitation against her was, he conceded, "perfectly legitimate"; and while he objected to some of the Austrian demands, he said that "he could not help feeling that the whole affair was a matter of words."‡ In accordance with the suggestion made privately by Count Pourtalès, M. Sazonov therefore proposed to Vienna that Count Szápáry "should be authorized to enter into a private exchange of views in order to redraft certain articles of the Austrian note." This procedure, he thought, would make it possible "to find a formula which would prove acceptable to Serbia, while giving satisfaction to Austria in respect of the chief of her demands."* According to the French ambassador, he "guaranteed the result."† As he had objected to only three of the ten demands, his attitude was certainly not intransigent; and he had made a definite proposal in the interest of peace.‡

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 217.

† Sazonov to Krupenski, telegram, 26 July; R 23.

‡ Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 73. The telegram is stated to have left St. Petersburg at 2.15 P. M. on 27 July, and Gooss, p. 206, says that the interview took place at noon on the 27th. But both Pourtalès (G 238) and Buchanan (B 170) state that it occurred on the afternoon of 26 July. Probably "2.15 P. M." is a slip for 2.15 A. M.; the telegram is so long that it could hardly have reached Vienna by 4.30 P. M. the same day, for ciphered telegrams were invariably hours in transit.

Both the Austro-Hungarian and German ambassadors were pleased with M. Sazonov's attitude. Count Szápáry noted with satisfaction that

> the road which Russian policy has travelled in two days, from the first rough condemnation of our action and belittling of our *dossier* to the idea of Europeanizing the whole matter and from that to recognizing the legitimacy of our claims and seeking for mediators, is a long one.§

Count Pourtalès had the impression that "Sazonov, perhaps as the result of information from Paris and London, has lost some of his nerve and is now seeking a way out."|| The Russian minister's remark that "for Russia the balance of power in the Balkans was a question of vital interest, and hence it was impossible for her to tolerate the reduction of Serbia to a vassal

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* Sazonov to Schebeko, telegram, 26 July; R 25.

† Paléologue to Bienvenu-Martin, 26 July; F 54.

‡ The concessions which Sazonov was disposed to make to the Austrian point of view, in case Berchtold agreed to "conversations," were indicated to the British ambassador the next day.

"He would [Sazonov said] use all his influence at Belgrade to induce Servian Government to go as far as possible in giving satisfaction to Austria, but her territorial integrity must be guaranteed and her rights as a sovereign State respected, so that she should not become Austria's vassal. He suggested that, in order to safeguard Austria against any revolutionary Servian propaganda in future and to dispose her to renounce some of her extreme demands, Powers might come to a private understanding to instruct their Ministers at Belgrade to keep in constant touch with each other, and to interchange all the information which any one of them might receive with regard to any Servian machinations or plots directed against Austria. In the event of any such information reaching them, they should be empowered to exercise pressure on Servian Government with a view to preventing such plots maturing." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 198. This scheme does not impress one as being very workable, and it sounds like an attempt to internationalize Berchtold's proposed '*bureau de sûreté*'; still it put Sazonov on record as recognizing that Austria-Hungary was entitled to security against Serbian agitation.

§ Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 73.

|| Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 238.

state of Austria,"* seems not to have been taken seriously. If the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was indeed aware that "military influence is energetically at work which threatens to modify the diplomatic situation daily to our disadvantage," his German colleague had received from M. Sazonov the asssurance that

> no mobilization orders of any sort had been issued; that, on the contrary, it had been decided at the ministerial council to hold back such orders until Austria-Hungary assumed a hostile attitude toward Russia.†

The representatives of the Central Powers appear to have regarded the situation with considerable optimism.

M. Sazonov's admission that "certain military preparations, in order to avoid surprise," had already been made, certainly had an ominous ring. But at the express request of the foreign minister, the minister of war, General Sukhomlinov, sent for the German military attaché in order to "clear up the military situation." According to the attaché, Major von Eggeling,

> The minister of war gave me his word of honor that as yet no mobilization orders of any kind had been issued. For the present nothing but preparatory measures were being undertaken; not a horse was being requisitioned, not a reservist called up. Should Austria invade Serbian territory, the military districts of Kiev, Odessa, Moscow and Kazan, facing Austria, would be mobilized: in no circumstances those on the German front, Warsaw, Vilna, and St. Petersburg. . . . Minister emphasized strongly and repeatedly need of and desire for peace.

This statement was, in fact, in strict accordance with the decisions taken at the crown council on the previous day.‡ Major von Eggeling received from the general's remarks "an impression of great nervousness"; while he suspected that "preparatory measures are very far-reaching" and that "complete mobilization" was being considered, nevertheless he believed the "desire for peace to be sincere" and the governing idea "hope in Germany and in the mediation of His Majesty [the German Emperor]."* Similar hopes were said to prevail in court circles. Indeed the German Emperor's aide-de-camp in the Tsar's suite, General von Chelius, had it hinted to him that a telegram from William to Nicholas II, appealing to the monarchical feelings of the Tsar, might be "the best means" of preserving peace.†

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 217.
† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 230.
‡ See above, I, 505–506.

The court, the foreign office, and the army, then, were all anxious for a pacific solution of the Austro-Serbian difficulty. On the next day, 27 July, the press published a statement, concocted by Pourtalès and Szápáry,‡ that Germany had not been inciting Austria-Hungary and had not known beforehand the contents of the note to Serbia, and this, at the prompting of the government, was treated as a reassuring sign. The German ambassador continued to be optimistic. He reported that the public, perhaps because of continued disturbances among the working classes, was "in a dejected mood," and that "there is little enthusiasm for war to be remarked." The fact that forty-eight hours had passed without any news of an Austrian invasion of Serbia made people "breathe more easily," and the declaration of the German Government that Austria-Hungary had no territorial ambitions had "plainly had a quieting effect on M. Sazonov."§

When toward evening the German ambassador communicated to M. Sazonov the warnings received from Berlin against military preparations on the part of Russia,|| the minister did not resent them and repeated his assurances of the day before.

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 242. Sukhomlinov told the American chargé that "he considers war between Austria and Russia almost inevitable." The chargé understood that "Russian Government has ordered complete army mobilization to begin immediately." Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 26 July; US, p. 15. Wilson had to report two days later, however, that the order for mobilization had not yet been issued. Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 28 July; US, p. 17.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 229.

‡ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 215.

§ Pourtalès to Bethmann-Hollweg, 27 July; G 339.

|| G 198 and 219. See above, p. 8.

> The appeal to our old-established friendly relations was warmly echoed by him and stirred him deeply. [Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg] might remain assured that Russia would not abuse the confidence in her love of peace. He [Sazonov] was ready to go to the limit in accommodating Austria, and to exhaust all means for bringing about a peaceful solution of the crisis.
>
> . . . the moment had come, in his opinion, to seek the means, by an exchange of views between the Powers, "of building a golden bridge for Austria." . . . There must be a way of giving Serbia the lesson she deserved without infringement of her sovereign rights.

Pourtalès thought Sazonov's criticisms of the Austrian arguments "much more feeble than a day or two ago"; in any case, "his language was just as conciliatory as yesterday."*

Since the British ambassador likewise found M. Sazonov "very conciliatory and more optimistic"† and his French colleague had the same impression, the attitude of the Russian Government may be described as one of entire correctness. It desired, if possible, a settlement of the Austro-Serbian dispute by negotiation, and it was prepared to concede a good deal to the Cabinet of Vienna, almost everything in fact except an interference with the sovereign rights of Serbia. But apparently because M. Sazonov in his conversations with Count Pourtalès and Count Szápáry did not repeat his warning that Russia would go to war if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, the German ambassador failed to appreciate that Russia was in deadly earnest in her determination to defend Serbia against attack, and his Austrian colleague was not impressed by an unofficial warning.‡

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 28 July, filed in St. Petersburg, 27 July, 8.40 P. M.; G 282.

† Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 27 July; E 198.

‡ Dr. Polly (see above, I, 495) informed the Austro-Hungarian embassy that the Pechevsky Most "now describes almost all our demands as justified and capable of realization, and regrets only the form and method of the execution. They knew quite well that the Serbs were not agreeable neighbors. . . . They expected that we would yet show conciliation to Serbia in some way or other, in which case a peaceful solution was certainly possible." This overture was met with "complete cool-

The Russian determination is clearly manifest in a telegram which, at long last, the Tsar sent to the Prince Regent of Serbia in reply to the latter's appeal of 24 July:

> The existing situation is engaging my most serious attention, and my government are using their utmost endeavor to smooth away the present difficulties. I have no doubt that Your Highness and the Royal Serbian Government wish to render that task easy by neglecting no step which might lead to a settlement, and thus both prevent the horrors of a new war, and safeguard the dignity of Serbia.
>
> So long as the slightest hope exists of avoiding bloodshed, all our efforts must be directed to that end; but if in spite of all our earnest wish we are not successful, Your Highness may rest assured that Russia will in no case disinterest herself in the fate of Serbia.*

The cheerful conclusion of the German ambassador that M. Sazonov was weakening in his opposition to the Austro-Hungarian policy was quite subjective and thoroughly wide of the mark.

If anything, M. Sazonov's attitude had stiffened during the day. When informed of Baron von Schoen's efforts to induce pressure by the French Government on its ally and of M. Bienvenu-Martin's counter-suggestion that the four Powers not directly interested should make representations at both Vienna and St. Petersburg,† he replied that "it was necessary to correct a misunderstanding which has crept into the answer of the acting foreign minister":

> If there is a question of exercising moderating influence in St. Petersburg, we reject it in advance, as we have adopted at the outset a point of view which we cannot change; for we have

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ness and indifference," whereupon Polly said that "he did not doubt that the outbreak of hostilities between the Monarchy and Serbia would lead to a European conflict." In reply he was told that "this would be greatly regretted on our part, but naturally even this eventuality is present to our minds and that now [*heute*] certainly it does not lie with us to exclude it." Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,837.

* Nicholas II to Crown Prince Alexander, 27 July; R 40.

† Sevastopulo to Sazonov, telegram, 26 July; R 28.

> already shown ourselves favorable to all of Austria's demands which are acceptable.*

Too much must not be inferred from this declaration. Read carefully, it came to this: Russia regarded certain of the Austro-Hungarian demands as unacceptable, and would not yield to pressure to accept them. On the other hand, in the first part of the telegram, M. Sazonov stated that he was ready to accept any British proposal "calculated to effect a peaceful settlement if our direct negotiations with the Cabinet of Vienna lead to no result." But there is no mistaking the fact that France was warned not to interfere; and inasmuch as the declaration was not communicated to the British Government† and was suppressed in the *Orange Book* published in August, 1914, it was presumably regarded as compromising.

There is yet another indication of M. Sazonov's frame of mind on this day. The Tsar, in an autograph letter, communicated to his minister "an idea which had just come to [him]":

> Why should we not try for an understanding with France and England, and then with Germany and Italy, to propose that Austria should submit her dispute with Serbia to the examination of the Hague Tribunal? Perhaps the time has not yet passed, before the situation becomes irreparable. . . . My hope for peace is not yet exhausted.‡

Nicholas instructed Sazonov to take this step "to-day." So far as is known, Sazonov did not do so, on that day or subsequently, and he does not refer to the matter in his memoirs. The Central Powers would certainly have resisted such a proposal had it been made,§ and it may be doubted whether the proposal was very practicable, for the question at issue was political, not easily arbitrable; still the fact that M. Sazonov ignored the Tsar's command suggests that he regarded war as probable.*

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* Sazonov to Izvolski, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 19.
† See editorial note on B 206.
‡ Nicholas II to Sazonov, private, 27 July; Marchand, II, 283; R, 1925 40.
§ See below, p. 166.

Nevertheless, M. Sazonov was not unreasonable when he talked the next day with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador. To Count Szápáry's admission that he was not yet empowered to open conversations, he replied frankly that the situation was "serious"; but his urgent request for the promised *dossier* before the war began—"once the war had broken out, it would be too late to examine *dossiers*"—gave the ambassador the impression that "he hoped to find in the *dossier* something which would make it possible for him to abandon Serbia." Likewise, in spite of the fact that the assurance of Austro-Hungarian territorial disinterestedness—now communicated for the first time—"did not make much impression," Szápáry was persuaded that "the minister, obviously reluctant to be drawn into conflict with us, is clutching at straws in the hope of escaping from the present situation." The only thing that seemed to interest him was preventing "the infeudation of Serbia"†—which, from the Russian point of view, was the root of the whole matter.

During the three days, 26–28 July, the preparatory military measures authorized on 25 July were reported in full swing in Russia. Thus, at Odessa and Kiev the railways were placed on a war footing.‡ At Riga both the port and the railways were given over to military control; the mouth of the Dwina was mined.§ Lights were extinguished on the Baltic coast and at Sebastopol.|| In Russian Poland troops began to move

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* Buchanan reported Sazonov as saying that "he could not tell me when ukase [for partial mobilization] would be issued, but spoke of day on which Austrian army entered Servia as a likely date." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 170. On the other hand, the American chargé reported: "Situation though still acute less so than yesterday and chances of peace improved, though army clamoring for war." Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 27 July; US, p. 16.

† Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July, 10 A. M.; A III 16. Internal evidence, however, shows that the conversation took place on 28 July, before the news arrived of the Austrian declaration of war.

‡ Roberts to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 167. Hein to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,804.

§ Bosanquet to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 178. Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 274.

|| Bosanquet and Roberts to Grey, telegrams, 29 July; B 279, 280.

toward the frontier,[*] although up to 27 July, no reservists had been called to the colors.[†] These and similar movements from Kiev[‡] and Odessa[§] could doubtless be explained by the necessity of guarding the railways.[||] But rumors began to circulate of impending or secret mobilization at Moscow, Kiev, Warsaw, and Vilna.[¶] The American chargé was definitely of the opinion that "Russian mobilization has been going on quietly several days though decree [has] not [been] published officially."[**]

There is, indeed, no proof that any measures of mobilization were ordered before 29 July. The Russian general Golovin states that "on 26 July not a single man in Russia was called to the colors; not a single horse or vehicle was requisitioned";[††] which, however, is hardly conclusive. The best explanation of what was happening has been given by General Dobrorolski, the chief of the mobilization section of the Russian general staff in 1914, whose narrative has the ring of honesty and accuracy. According to him,

> The inauguration of the period preparatory to mobilization did not warrant proceeding to measures having the character of mobilization; but it was clear that in the frontier districts, where the population and the authorities were nervous, it was possible that the latter, for purposes of security, let themselves be moved to order measures of mobilization prematurely.

He states that in the Suvalki district, horses were bought prematurely, and that even General Sukhomlinov, when he tried to reassure the German military attaché on the afternoon of 26 July, "could not guarantee that no frontier or district officer would not act of his own initiative, now that the preparatory period had been proclaimed."* In fact, under cover of the preparatory measures, practically all steps could be taken prior to the actual mobilization. The general points out, however, that on 27 July the Tsar, in order to emphasize his friendly attitude to Germany, personally ordered the release of a German ship at Cronstadt which was using its wireless contrary to the orders which had been published.†

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[*] Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 234. Andrian to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,852.

[†] Bruck to foreign office, telegram from Warsaw, 27 July; G 276.

[‡] Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 275.

[§] Paumgartner to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,898.

[||] *Russlands Mobilmachung für den Weltkrieg*, p. 21.

[¶] Hauschild to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 295. Haydin to Berchtold, telegrams, 27, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,816, 10,896. Paumgartner to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 77 (repeated to Berlin by Tschirschky in telegram of 28 July; G 327). Roberts to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 260.

[**] Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 28 July; US, p. 17.

[††] N. N. Golovin, *Изъ исторіи кампаніи 1914 года на русскомъ фронтѣ* [History of the campaign of 1914 on the Russian front], quoted by M. T. Florinsky, " The Russian Mobilization of 1914," in *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII, 204 (June, 1927).

That the Russian Government was preparing for all emergencies, there can be no doubt.‡ But its diplomacy was conciliatory, at least outwardly, and in addition to its own proposals for direct conversations with Austria-Hungary, the cabinets had been seized of quite a different proposal emanating from Sir Edward Grey.

Great Britain and a Conference

No statesman was more anxious to preserve the peace of Europe than the British foreign secretary. One cannot read the despatches and telegrams of Sir Edward Grey in July, 1914, without feeling the sincerity and earnestness with which he put forward various proposals. Unlike his continental colleagues, who seemed reconciled to a general war, the idea was abhorrent to the Englishman, and in straightforward language devoid of diplomatic subtleties, he urged them at least to talk matters over before resorting to military action. Moreover, he seemed to enjoy a certain advantage of position. He had publicly stated that Great Britain was not committed to either of the rival groups; his success in preventing war between the Great

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* Dobrorolski, p. 22.

† Dobrorolski, p. 23; also Pourtalès, p. 34.

‡ At noon on 28 July, the commander at Warsaw was informed that it was intended to transfer a cavalry division from Kazan and two cavalry brigades from Moscow into the Warsaw district if possible. According to the plan for partial mobilization, these troops would normally operate on the Austrian front. But "for political reasons" they were not to be moved to the German frontier before the announcement of mobilization. Frantz, pp. 63, 245.

Powers during the Balkan troubles of 1912–1913 had brought him no little prestige; his services had been publicly recognized by the German Government; Count Berchtold considered him comparatively impartial. He was therefore entitled to expect that any suggestion from him would receive respectful consideration. At the same time, Sir Edward Grey had to approach the European problem as the guardian of British interests, and a situation might arise to which the hackneyed statement that "the greatest of British interests is peace" might not apply.

Fortunately the minister himself has recorded the four considerations which guided him throughout the crisis. As stated in his memoirs, they were:

> 1. A conviction that a great European war under modern conditions would be a catastrophe for which previous wars afforded no precedent. . . . I thought that this must be obvious to every one else, as it seemed obvious to me; and that, if once it became apparent that we were on the edge, all the Great Powers would call a halt and recoil from the abyss.
>
> 2. That Germany was so immensely strong and Austria so dependent on German strength that the word and will of Germany would at the critical moment be decisive with Austria. It was therefore to Germany that we must address ourselves.
>
> 3. That, if war came, the interest of Britain required that we should not stand aside, while France fought alone in the West, but must support her. I knew it to be very doubtful whether the Cabinet, Parliament, and the country would take this view on the outbreak of war, and through the whole of this week I had in view the probable contingency that we should not decide at the critical moment to support France. In that event I should have to resign; but the decision of the country could not be forced, and the contingency might not arise, and meanwhile I must go on.
>
> 4. A clear view that no pledge must be given, no hope even held out to France and Russia, which it was doubtful whether this country would fulfil. One danger I saw so hideous that it must be avoided and guarded against at every word. It was that France and Russia might face the ordeal of war with Germany relying upon our support; that this support might not be

> forthcoming, and that we might then, when it was too late, be held responsible by them for having let them in for a disastrous war. Of course I could resign if I gave them hopes which it turned out that the Cabinet and Parliament would not sanction. But what good would my resignation be to them in their ordeal? This was the vision of possible blood guilt that I saw, and I was resolved that I would have none of it on my head.*

In respect of Point 1, it may be noted that Grey had at first been of the opinion that "it was better that Serbia should give way than that European peace should be broken."† But after the conciliatory reply of Serbia, he deemed Austria-Hungary to be in the wrong for proceeding to a diplomatic rupture,‡ and was not disposed to exert pressure on Russia.

Point 2 was sound in principle, at least it had proved effective in 1912–1913, and in July, 1914, Sir Edward Grey was justified in assuming that Germany would act as a third party to the dispute. He did not and could not know that the German Government had so completely committed itself to Austria-Hungary at the outset and thereafter so vigorously pressed its ally to action that it could not mediate without revoking its promises of 5 July and 6 July and repudiating its advice of 25 July. But the British minister was not long in discovering that the German attitude toward his suggestions was very different from what it had been in 1912–1913.

The issue involved in Point 3 was not acute until the end of the crisis. But it was present to Grey's mind from the beginning, and the more the tactics employed under Point 2 failed to achieve their purpose, the more was he forced to think in terms of Point 3. One may also note (1) that Sir Edward based his opinion not on any British obligation to take part in a war involving France, but solely on the ground of national interests; and (2) that the question of intervention would have to be decided not by his wishes, but by circumstances.

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* Grey, I, 312–313; American edition, I, 302–303.

† *Ibid.*, I, 310; American edition, I, 300.

‡ His chief agreed with him. "The news this morning [26 July] is that Servia has capitulated on the main point, but it is very doubtful if any reservation will be accepted by Austria, who is resolved on a complete and final humiliation. The curious thing is that on many, if not most, of the points Austria has a good and Servia a very bad case, but the Austrians are quite the stupidest people in Europe. There is a brutality about their mode of procedure which will make most people think that this is a case of a big Power wantonly bullying a little one. Anyhow, it is the most dangerous situation of the last forty years." Oxford and Asquith, II, 8.

The problem of Point 4 had to be faced at once. The Russian foreign minister, through both Sir George Buchanan in St. Petersburg and Count Benckendorff in London, had appealed for a declaration of British solidarity with Russia and France, on the ground that this would be the most effective means to prevent war.* Moreover, the permanent officials of the foreign office were of much the same opinion. On Buchanan's telegram, Sir Eyre Crowe, the assistant under-secretary, wrote:

> The point that matters is whether Germany is or is not absolutely determined to have this war now.
>
> There is still the chance that she can be made to hesitate, if she can be induced to apprehend that the war will find England by the side of France and Russia.
>
> I can suggest only one effective way of bringing this home to the German Government without absolutely committing us definitely at this stage. If, the moment either Austria or Russia begin to mobilize, His Majesty's Government give orders to put our whole fleet on an immediate war footing, this may conceivably make Germany realize the seriousness of the danger to which she would be exposed if England took part in the war.
>
> It would be right, supposing this decision could be taken now, to inform the French and Russian Governments of it.

Sir Arthur Nicolson, the permanent under-secretary, agreed that "the points raised by Sir Eyre Crowe merit serious consideration."† But this point of view implied giving a pledge which it might not be possible to fulfil—the very thing which Sir Edward Grey had excluded in his Point 4. Grey accordingly noted that he thought it "premature to make any statement to France and Russia yet," and telegraphed to Sir George Buchanan:

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* See above, I, 500, 502.

† Minutes on B 101.

> You spoke quite rightly [in refusing to hold out any hope of a declaration of solidarity] in very difficult circumstances as to attitude of His Majesty's Government. I entirely approve, and I cannot promise more on behalf of His Majesty's Government [than to point out at Vienna and Berlin that if the war became general it would be difficult for England to remain neutral].*

Very definitely, then, Sir Edward refused to commit Great Britain in advance, in spite of Crowe's urging that "we shall gain nothing by not making up our minds what we can do in circumstances that may arise to-morrow." Grey's mind was made up, but that did not enable him to give pledges which might be beyond his power to fulfil.

The problem was indeed one of extraordinary difficulty. Crowe saw in the Austro-German action a definite challenge:

> The moment has passed when it might have been possible to enlist French support in an effort to hold back Russia.
>
> It is clear that France and Russia are decided to accept the challenge thrown out to them. Whatever we may think of the merits of the Austrian charges against Servia, France and Russia consider that these are the pretexts, and the bigger cause of Triple Alliance versus Triple *Entente* is definitely engaged.

The German action, in effect, forced England to choose, and Crowe did not hesitate:

> I think it would be impolitic, not to say dangerous, for England to attempt to controvert this opinion, or to endeavour to obscure the plain issue by any representation at St. Petersburg and Paris.

Furthermore, he was quite clear why this was the only possible policy for England:

> Should the war come, and England stand aside, one of two things must happen:
>
> (a) Either Germany and Austria win, crush France, and

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* Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 25 July; B 112.

> humiliate Russia. With the French fleet gone, Germany in occupation of the Channel, with the willing or unwilling co-operation of Holland and Belgium, what will be the position of a friendless England?
>
> (b) Or France and Russia win. What would then be their attitude toward England? What about India and the Mediterranean?
>
> Our interests are tied up with those of France and Russia in this struggle, which is not for the possession of Servia, but one between Germany aiming at a political dictatorship in Europe and the Powers who desire to retain individual freedom.

But however fully Sir Edward Grey might share this opinion, he had to remain within the bounds set him by political and parliamentary necessities.

But this was not the only point. War was not, on 25 July, certain, however probable it might seem. It was possible that Austria-Hungary would yield to pressure or that Russia would not decide to fight. If peace were preserved, the old diplomatic situation would be restored. Crowe was anxious "to prevent a very grave situation arising as between England and Russia." "Our attitude during the crisis," said Nicolson, "will be regarded by Russia as a test and we must be careful not to alienate her." The British foreign office was no more willing than the Quai d'Orsay to have the Austro-Hungarian enterprise against Serbia exploited so as to disrupt the Triple Entente.

There was less reason than ever to run this risk in view of the admissions of Albert Ballin. The shipping magnate had been sent to England, it will be recalled, by the German foreign minister to work behind the back of Prince Lichnowsky, who was not informed of the intrigue.* On the evening of 24 July, he dined with Lord Haldane and sat next to Mr. Winston Churchill. The latter gives this account of Ballin's talk:

> He said the situation was grave. 'I remember,' he said, 'old Bismarck telling me the year before he died that one day the great European war would come out of some damned thing in

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* Lichnowsky, I, 247.

> the Balkans.' These words, he said, might come true. It all depended on the Tsar. What would he do if Austria chastised Serbia? A few years before there had been no danger, as the Tsar was too frightened for his throne, but now again he was feeling himself more secure upon his throne, and the Russian people besides would feel very hardly anything done against Serbia. Then he said, 'If Russia marches against Austria, we must march; and if we march, France must march, and what would England do?'

To Mr. Churchill's remark that "it would be a great mistake to suppose that England would necessarily do nothing" Ballin replied:

> Suppose we had to go to war with Russia and France, and suppose we defeated France and yet took nothing from her in Europe, not an inch of her territory, only some colonies to indemnify us. Would that make a difference to England's attitude? Suppose we gave a guarantee beforehand.*

This overture, so definite and so peremptory, and coming from the man who for several years had been used by the German Government as an unofficial mediary in very delicate situations, was of a kind to create the worst suspicions in the minds of

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* Churchill, pp. 195–196; American edition, p. 207. Churchill would only say that "England would judge events as they arose." Haldane gives this account of the meeting: "At that moment I think that he [Ballin] must have been apprehensive that war would break out, although we ourselves were then hopeful that it might still be avoided; for after dinner he spoke to Grey and myself separately about the position of Great Britain and our relations with Germany. We both told him that so far these were quite good, but that their maintenance was dependent on Germany not attacking France. In such a case Germany could not reckon on our neutrality. Just before England declared war on Germany on 4th August, Ballin sent me by messenger a letter recalling the dinner and his pleasure at being present, and expressing the hope, based on what he imagined we had said, that if Germany did not try to 'swallow up' France, England would be neutral. I did not answer this letter, which arrived only the day before war broke out. The only material point about it was that Ballin represented Grey and myself as having used the words 'swallow up,' whereas we had really said 'attack' when we defined the condition." *Richard Burdon Haldane: an Autobiography* (London, 1929), p. 270; the letter is printed on pp. 271–273. Haldane adds that "the letter did not appear to me to be of importance." The *nuance* between 'attack' and 'swallow up' was apparently, however, of more importance than Haldane realized; for it will be seen presently (pp. 153–154) that on 29 July Germany made an appeal for British neutrality practically on the understanding that although she might 'attack' France, she would not 'swallow her up.'

British statesmen and Mr. Churchill's narrative implies that it did have this effect.*

British policy began to take positive form on 25 July. During the morning Sir Edward Grey saw Prince Lichnowsky, who had been instructed to refute the opinion that Germany had incited Austria-Hungary to send the note to Serbia and had participated in its preparation.† The minister, renewing his suggestion of the day before, said that

> The only chance of peace would be for the four Powers, Germany, Italy, France and ourselves, to keep together if Russia and Austria did both mobilize, and to join in asking Austria and Russia not to cross frontier till there had been time for us to endeavour to arrange matters between them . . . if Austria and Russia mobilized the participation of Germany would be essential to any diplomatic action for peace.‡

"Sir E. Grey . . .," said Prince Lichnowsky, "counts with certainty on the Austrian mobilization being followed by that of Russia";§ or, as Grey put it, "We should now apparently be soon confronted by a moment at which both Austria and Russia would have mobilized." Germany was given clearly to understand that Great Britain would not urge Russia not to mobilize, and that she would exert pressure to prevent the crossing of the frontier only if Germany was prepared in similar fashion to restrain Austria-Hungary. This, Grey thought, "must induce the German Government to take the matter seriously." He was quite aware that he was asking Germany, instead of mobilizing against Russia, to suspend mobilization and "join with us in intervention with Austria, thereby throwing away the advantage of time," and he was afraid that "there might be difficulty in its acceptance by the German Government." Nevertheless, he "had no doubt that it was the best proposal to make in the interests of peace."‖ The proposal, it may be noted, was the opposite of what Sir Eyre Crowe had suggested; it was inspired by the idea that the four less interested Powers should withhold support from Russia and Austria-Hungary. It would not prevent Russian mobilization, but it would stave off a precipitate decision between peace and war.

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* He informed Grey and the cabinet of the matter.

† Zimmermann to Lichnowsky, telegram, 24 July; G 153.

‡ Grey to Rumbold, telegram, 25 July; B 116.

§ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 180.

‖ Grey to Buchanan, 25 July; B 132.

In the course of the day Sir Edward Grey informed Count Benckendorff of the proposal which he had made to Germany. The ambassador did not warm to the idea: he was "very apprehensive" that it "would give Germany the impression that France and England were detached from Russia," and he urged the British minister to "give some indication to Germany that [England] would not stand aside if there was a war." Such a request placed Sir Edward in a difficult position. He could not grant the request, and told the ambassador so without flinching; yet if he said nothing, Russia would doubt his loyalty to the Entente. Like Sir George Buchanan, he was "in very difficult circumstances." In order to allay the Russian fears, he told Benckendorff that he had made his proposal to Germany "on the assumption that Russia would mobilize." Read in cold print, this sounds almost equivalent to encouraging Russia to mobilize. But this was certainly not the reasoning of Sir Edward Grey: he took it for granted that if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia, Russia would mobilize, and, moreover, he seems to have considered Russian mobilization justified.* He made his statement because, being unable to give Benckendorff the assurances desired, he wished to show that he was trying to persuade Germany to peace, and the only way to do that was to repeat what he had said to Lichnowsky. Sir Edward Grey's good faith is not open to doubt, and he was thoroughly justified in warning Germany that Russia would mobilize. But in spite of his own views about Russian mobilization, it was an act of doubtful wisdom to communicate these views to the Russian Government.* We shall see later what use the Russian ambassador made of the news.

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* In his memoirs, he writes: "I did most honestly feel that neither Russian nor French mobilization was an unreasonable or unnecessary precaution. In Germany, in the centre of Europe, was the greatest army the world had ever seen, in a greater state of preparedness than any other, and what spirit was behind? I did not think the German Emperor counted for much, but others did, and the ring of his speeches, 'Smite in the face with my mailed fist,' 'shining armour,' 'sharp sword,' etc., was ever in people's ears. There was, too, the recollection of 1870 and the revelations of the Ems telegram. How could any one urge on Russia or France that the precaution of mobilization was unreasonable? How could any one affirm that it was safe to omit that precaution? For I believed the French and Russian mobilizations to be preparation, but not war. Indeed the French, when they mobilized, did it with instructions that no troops were to go within ten kilometres of the frontier. With Germany mobilization was something different. It was the last, and not the first word. The mechanism was so arranged that precaution and preparations were always taken and made. Mobilization was the word, and it was followed imme-

By the late evening of 25 July the news reaching London had begun to be ominous. It was known that Baron Giesl had broken off diplomatic relations with the Belgrade Government.† In Paris the view prevailed that there would be a revolution in Serbia if all the Austrian demands were accepted.‡ At Berlin the Austro-Hungarian embassy was letting it be known that in its opinion

> localization of crisis between Austria-Hungary and Servia will depend on whether, and, if so, to what extent, Russia and France think that they can reckon on active support of His Majesty's Government in the event of a general conflagration.§

From St. Petersburg came the information that Russia was ready to mobilize 1,100,000 men, that the "necessary preliminary preparations would be begun at once," and that "secure of support of France, she will face all the risks of war." Along with this was a new appeal for British solidarity, this time not

diately by the blow." Grey, I, 331; American edition, I, 321. Grey was right to the extent that Russia could wait for the completion of mobilization before striking, whereas Germany was not prepared to, and actually did not, wait so long. But if he expected Germany not to mobilize if Russia and France did so, he was singularly ill informed; at the moment, however, he did not expect French mobilization. It is possible that he had in mind the kind of preparations made by Russia in 1912–1913, when a time-expired class was kept with the colors and other preparations made short of actual mobilization.

* Grey to Buchanan, 25 July; B 132. This despatch was included in the original draft of the British *White Paper* of 1914, but was omitted because Benckendorff had demurred to Grey's proposal, and "Sir Edward Grey thought it would be kinder to the Ambassador not to publish this fact," according to the editorial note on the document. In the *White Paper* the intriguing word "*nil*" was printed in lieu of the despatch.

† Crackanthorpe to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 131.

‡ Bertie to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 127.

§ Rumbold to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 128.

from M. Sazonov, but from the British ambassador. Sir George Buchanan said that he had tried "to impress prudence" on the Russian minister; but he added:

> For ourselves position is a most perilous one, and we shall have to choose between giving Russia our active support or renouncing her friendship. If we fail her now we cannot hope to maintain that friendly co-operation with her in Asia that is of such vital importance to us.*

It would not be easy for the British Government to postpone much longer some kind of action, if such indications of danger continued to come in.

They did continue, all the next day, 26 July. The ambassador in Vienna telegraphed that he thought war with Serbia "imminent,"† and the military attaché began to report mobilization, estimating the numbers at nearly 500,000 men.‡ The German fleet, according to the Norwegian papers, "numbering twenty-eight large ships," had received orders to concentrate off the Norwegian coast; the German Emperor, without waiting for the fleet, had started for Kiel.§

As these disturbing telegrams poured into London, the first sea lord of the admiralty, Prince Louis of Battenberg, with the approval of Mr. Churchill, who had gone to the seaside for the week-end but was in constant communication with the admiralty,‖ decided that the situation justified holding together the fleet, which was about to disperse after the manœuvres. Accordingly at 4 P. M. a telegram was sent to Sir George Callaghan, the commander-in-chief, to say that

> no ships of the First Fleet, or any of its attached flotilla, were to leave Portland till further orders, and that the ships of the Second Fleet were to remain at their home ports in proximity to their balance crews.¶

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* Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 125.
† Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 25 July, received 8 A. M., 26 July; B 135.
‡ Bunsen to Grey, telegrams, 26 July; B 136, 142.
§ Findlay to Grey, telegrams, 26 July; B 137, 138.
‖ Churchill, p. 197; American edition, pp. 208–209.
¶ Sir J. S. Corbett, *Naval Operations* (London, 1920), I, 24.

Hardly had this order gone forth when news arrived that Berlin was teeming with warlike sentiment,* and at about the same time Prince Lichnowsky, in a "very excited" state, presented himself at the foreign office. His government, he said, "had received information that Russia was calling in 'classes of reserves,' which meant mobilization. If this mobilization took place on the German frontier, Germany would have to mobilize —and France naturally would follow suit."† He had therefore to request that "we would urge the Russian Government not to mobilize."‡ The only hopeful feature of the situation was Lichnowsky's notification that his government accepted Grey's suggested mediation *à quatre*.§

Sometime after 9 P. M., Mr. Churchill, who could not bear the strain at the seashore and had returned to London, went to see Sir Edward Grey, to tell him that the fleet was being kept together. Both the minister and his secretary, Sir William Tyrrell, "viewed the situation very gravely" and were "most insistent" that the admiralty should proclaim "at the earliest possible moment" that the fleet was being held: "It might have the effect of sobering the Central Powers and steadying Europe." Mr. Churchill thereupon sent to the press a notice which appeared in the papers of Monday morning, 27 July. It read:

> Orders have been given to the First Fleet, which is concentrated at Portland, not to disperse for manœuvre leave for the present. All vessels of the Second Fleet are remaining at their home ports in proximity to their balance crews.||

Come what might, the British Government could not now be surprised, and, though the result was accidental, its measures

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* Rumbold to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 147.

† Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 26 July; G 199. See above, p. 9.

‡ Nicolson's memorandum, 26 July; B 146.

§ Lichnowsky to Grey, 26 July; B 145. Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 25 July; G 192. On this very day, however, the German ambassador in Vienna was supporting his government's advice to Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia and begin military operations immediately. See above, pp. 3–4.

|| Churchill, pp. 198–199; American edition, p. 210.

preparatory for war were more advanced than those of any other Great Power.

During this day, while the admiralty was preparing for any eventuality, the foreign office also took a definite step. The Russian ambassador, it will be recalled, had shown himself "very apprehensive" of the proposed mediation *à quatre*. But not so his chief, who, according to Sir George Buchanan, "would like to see [the] question placed on an international footing":

> Were Servia [Sazonov said] to appeal to Powers, Russia would be quite ready to stand aside and leave question in hands of England, France, Italy and Germany.*

This suggested to Sir Arthur Nicolson, who was in charge at the foreign office for the day (Sir Edward Grey having gone to the country for the week-end), that the time had come to propose a conference of the Powers, a plan which yielded admirable results during the Balkan wars and which Grey had already decided to bring forward at the proper moment.† Although Nicolson thought it "a very poor chance," yet it seemed "the only chance of avoiding a conflict."‡ He therefore telegraphed for and received the approval of the foreign secretary,§ and at 3 P. M. the proposal was communicated to the British ambassadors in Paris, Berlin and Rome.

> Ask minister for foreign affairs if he would be disposed to instruct ambassador here to join with representatives of Italy, Germany, France, and myself in a conference to be held at once in order to endeavour to find an issue to prevent complications. With this view representatives at Vienna, St. Petersburg and Belgrade should be authorized in informing governments to which they are accredited of above suggestion to request that pending results of conference all active military operations should be suspended.||

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* Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 125.

† Grey, I, 314; American edition, I, 305. ‡ Nicolson to Grey, 26 July; B 144.

§ Nicolson to Grey, telegram, 26 July; Grey to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; B 139.

|| Grey to Bertie, Rumbold and Rodd, telegrams, 26 July; B 140. Bunsen was instructed to act with Berchtold when his Italian, French and German colleagues had received similar instructions. Grey to Bunsen, telegram, 26 July; B 141.

The proposal was also explained to Prince Lichnowsky, and justified with the argument that "in this way it would be possible to get full satisfaction for Austria, as Serbia would be more disposed to yield to the pressure of the Powers and submit to their united will than to the threats of Austria." At the same time he was reminded that "it was immensely important for Serbia's territory to remain inviolate until the question of the conference had been settled, for otherwise all efforts would be in vain and the world war unavoidable."* Events were to prove the correctness of this observation.

This proposal marked a distinct evolution in Sir Edward Grey's thinking, for he was now proposing that mediation between Austria-Hungary and Serbia which he had refused to consider two days before.† He himself has frankly explained the motives of his action. The first had to do with the possible military situation:

> I believed German preparations for war to be much more advanced than those of France and Russia;‡ the conference would give time for the latter Powers to prepare and for the situation to be altered to the disadvantage of Germany, who now had a distinct advantage.§

The second motive was political:

> The way in which the proposal was received would be a test of the genuineness and earnestness of the desire of each government for peace.||

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 236.

† See above, I, 513. Grey may have been influenced by the fact that France had not yet accepted his suggestion of mediation between Austria and Russia. Indeed, at 3.30 P. M., half an hour after the proposal for a conference was launched, a telegram referring to the earlier proposal was sent to Paris saying that "it is important to know if France will agree to suggested action by the four Powers if necessary." Grey to Bertie, telegram, 26 July; B 143.

‡ He must have had in mind the general preparedness of the German army and not the immediate situation; for whereas, at the moment of making the proposal, Russia was known to be preparing for the mobilization of 1,100,000 men, no reports had been received—at any rate none have been published—of German preparations, either naval or military—for the impending conflict.

§ Grey, I, 315; American edition, I, 305.

|| Grey, I, 316; American edition, I, 306.

The proposal was thus intended, to some extent, to 'smoke out' Germany, and its author was "apprehensive that she would not give an immediate acceptance."

But, if she did accept, then he was prepared to "give or get guarantees that there would be no mobilizations during the conference";* which was the vital thing, for without mobilization neither Austria could attack Serbia nor Russia attack Austria and Germany. To the British minister "it seemed certain after the Serbian reply that a conference, once summoned, must succeed and could not break down or fail," that every one must wish this consummation.

> And it would be an honourable peace, there would be no diplomatic scares; no vaunting of one side and humiliation on the other. After the submission of the Serbian reply to Austria, how easy it would be to arrange peace with honour, at any rate to Austria!†

The British proposal did run directly counter to the German contention that there must be no interference between Austria and Serbia, but it was based on the stern fact that in all human probability Russia did propose to interfere if Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia. It did not involve a final solution of the problem at issue, but it did offer a prompt means of postponing the immediate danger which would arise with the beginning of military operations against Serbia.

The proposal was accepted by Italy the same day,‡ and the Marquis di San Giuliano promised to "recommend warmly" to

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* A strict interpretation of the words "all active military operations should be suspended" would no doubt permit Russian mobilization to be carried out; but as the Russian plan was understood to be to mobilize if and when Austria actually moved against Serbia and Grey was asking Austria to refrain from military operations, a bargain was seemingly possible.

† Grey, I, 314; American edition, I, 304. Lichnowsky was of the same opinion. "It would have been easy to find an acceptable form for the disputed points, which concerned principally the co-operation of the Austrian officials in the investigations at Belgrade. With good will, everything could have been settled in one or two sittings, and even the mere acceptance of the British proposal would have relieved the tension and further have improved our relations with England." Lichnowsky, I, 130.

‡ Rodd to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 154.

Berlin and Vienna the suspension of military operations.* The French Government accepted it the next day, and instructed its ambassador in Berlin to concert with his British colleague as to the advisability of joining him in speaking to the German Government.† M. Sazonov replied that he preferred direct conversations with Vienna, of which he entertained the hope of favorable results; but he added that if these were not realized, he was ready to accept the British proposal,‡ and he assured Sir George Buchanan that "he was perfectly ready to stand aside if conference was accepted by other Powers."§ Thus Italy and France and Russia accepted the plan, which was ready to come into operation before Austria-Hungary had opened hostilities against Serbia.

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* Memorandum of Nicolson of conversation with Imperiali, 27 July; B 189.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 183. The formal French acceptance was conveyed in a note handed to Bertie on the same day; B 194. A shorter version was presented to the foreign office the next day; B 211. The French Government took advantage of the situation to include in its note an acceptance of Grey's original suggestion (B 112 and 116) of mediation between Austria and Russia, which was apparently not to its liking. Now that Grey was proposing mediation between Austria and Serbia, as Paul Cambon had desired from the first, the Quai d'Orsay could safely accept the idea of mediation between Austria and Russia.

‡ Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 27 July; B 206.

§ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 198.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST SERBIA

GERMANY AND THE CONFERENCE

IN transmitting the British proposal for a conference Prince Lichnowsky quoted Sir William Tyrrell, the private secretary of Sir Edward Grey, as saying:

> The localization of the conflict as hoped for in Berlin is wholly impossible and must be dropped from the calculations of practical politics. If we two—that is, His Majesty the Emperor or his government and representatives in conjunction with Sir E. Grey—succeed in saving the peace of Europe, Anglo-German relations will be placed on a secure foundation for all time. If we do not, then everything is uncertain.

And the ambassador added, as his own opinion:

> I should like to offer the urgent warning against believing any further in the possibility of localization, and to express the humble wish that our policy should be guided solely and exclusively by the necessity of sparing the German people a struggle in which it has nothing to gain and everything to lose.*

The views of Prince Lichnowsky were not likely to gain a hearing in Berlin, but the warning of Sir William Tyrrell ought to have given pause. From the German point of view, however, the British proposal was, as the Bavarian minister was authoritatively informed, "extremely inopportune."† Quite apart from the objection that it involved interference in the Austro-Serbian dispute, which the German Government was determined to avoid, there were two special difficulties.

The first, and less important, difficulty, had to do with Italy, who would be associated with Germany in the proposed conference as representatives of the Triple Alliance. But the attitude of Italy, as viewed by the German Government, continued to be unsatisfactory. According to Prince Lichnowsky, the story spread by Vienna that Italy had consented to the Austro-Hungarian action and had made promises in the spirit of the Triple Alliance did not, in the opinion of the British foreign office, "correspond with the facts,"* and Berlin knew this to be the case. The Marquis di San Giuliano had declared once more that the procedure of Austria-Hungary was "in the highest degree precarious for Italy," that he did not believe in the Austrian promises not to claim Serbian territory, and that "in default of compensation, Italy would be forced 'to stand in the way of Austria.' "† He had even gone so far as to present a formal declaration‡ in Vienna stating that

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 236.

† Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 28 July; Dirr, p. 154.

> Italy must reserve her right to compensation in accordance with the terms of Article VII, even in the case of a provisional occupation of Serbian territory.§

Even if his advice not to reject Sir Edward Grey's suggestion of mediation between Austria-Hungary and Russia, lest this "drive him toward the other side at the moment when his cooperation was worth buying,"‖ showed that he was not disloyal to the spirit of the Triple Alliance, it was evident that the Italian Government still strongly resented the prospect of Austro-Hungarian military action against Serbia. If, therefore, a conference met, Italy would probably—and certainly, in default of compensation—join with Great Britain and France in seeking a solution which would prevent any military action.

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 237. The British ambassador in Rome had reported that in the opinion of the Italian Government, "even if Russia should intervene in support of Servia, inasmuch as Austria did not consult Italy before delivering note, and inasmuch as by her mode of attack on Servia she would be constructively provoking Russia, the *casus foederis* contemplated by alliance would not arise." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 148.

† Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 211.

‡ Text in A II 46.

§ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 212.

‖ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 225.

After the war, Herr von Jagow put this consideration forward as the principal factor in the German decision:

> In the situation of England and France with respect to Russia, in view of the Serbophil attitude of Italy, we should, according to all previous experience of Germany, have been isolated in defending the interests of Austria.*

But there is no evidence in the contemporary documents to show that this reasoning entered into the German calculations. Herr von Jagow goes on to remark, disingenuously enough, that

> the course of previous conferences, the dragging-out [*Hinziehen*] of the solution by lengthy and detailed negotiations with their incalculable incidents, did not make this appear a suitable means of getting rid of the dangers of war.

As matters stood when the British proposal was presented, an immediate danger of war existed only because the German Government, as we have seen, was urging its hesitant ally to proceed immediately to a declaration of war and military operations in order to forestall mediation by the other Powers. And it was this fact, so one is justified in thinking, and not the policy of Italy, which determined the attitude of the German Government toward the British proposal.

The German pressure on Vienna had not produced the results desired. Although the advice transmitted from Berlin by Count Szögyény had been "warmly supported" by Herr von Tschirschky, General Conrad had refused to begin operations before 12 August, and had left the German Government to get what comfort it could from his remark that "a formal declaration of war would probably prove superfluous, because, according to his certain information, hostile inroads across the Bosnian frontier would be made by Serbia within the next few days."† This was resented in Berlin.

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* Jagow, *Ursachen und Ausbruch des Krieges*, pp. 119–120.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 213. For the full report, see above, p. 4.

> They are displeased here [wrote the Bavarian minister] because Austria-Hungary states that she cannot begin an attack before the expiration of fourteen, or, at the least, ten days. This may be justified from a military point of view, but not politically, according to the opinion here, for it is feared that the enthusiasm aroused both there [in Austria] and in Germany by the vigorous procedure of the Monarchy may die down to a certain extent.*

The difficulty in which the British proposal placed the German Government is apparent. Since Austria-Hungary was not ready to move, a conference, if it met, would have several weeks in which to work out a compromise intended to deprive the Dual Monarchy of any excuse for military action. It would be hard enough for Berlin to resist the pressure from the other Powers to accept such a compromise, but it would be harder still for the German Government, after having urged the Cabinet of Vienna to begin military operations at once, to reverse itself by advising the acceptance of a proposal designed to prevent military operations. In these circumstances, the obvious course for the German Government was to reject the British proposal.†

Moreover, news had been received which supported the hypothesis that Great Britain would not take part in a war arising out of a Balkan quarrel. Prince Henry of Prussia, the Emperor's brother, had breakfasted with King George V of Great Britain on Sunday morning, 26 July.‡ The King, so the Prince reported, expressed "his intense desire that Anglo-German joint action might, with the assistance of France and Italy, succeed in controlling the present extremely serious situation in the interest of peace."[*] This was a plea for co-operation; but Prince Henry confided to the naval attaché of the German embassy in London another remark of King George: "England would maintain neutrality in case war should break out between the Continental Powers."[‡] This was reported by the naval attaché and communicated to Herr von Bethmann the same day.[‡] The attaché added that the British fleet had discharged its reservists and granted leave to its crews according to programme.

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* Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 28 July; Dirr, p. 154.

† There is no documentary evidence to prove that this was the reasoning of the German Government. But the hypothesis here formulated is supported circumstantially by the action of the German Government on the afternoon of 27 July, which is set forth below (pp. 62–66).

‡ Nicolson to Grey, 26 July; B 144. "Prince Henry said if Russia moved there would be an internal revolution and the dynasty be upset. This is nonsense—but it shows how anxious they are to make out to us that Russia will remain quiet and to spread about that we will be equally quiescent—a foolish procedure—(Prince Henry has gone back to Germany)."

The effect of these reports on the German calculations can be gauged from three incidents. In the first place, the news about the British fleet was relayed to the Emperor, and he was asked to order the German fleet to remain in Norway for the present, "as this would materially lighten the task of England's proposed mediation at St. Petersburg, which is evidently beginning to get shaky."[§] Secondly, it was decided not to send to London a telegram, actually drafted, which read as follows:

> It is to be hoped that the British Government can have no doubt as to the meaning of the victory of Russia, in the event of such a conflict [i. e., with Austria-Hungary], and of the general Slav advance, not only to the balance of power in Europe, but also to the political, economic and civilized interests of all western Europe.[||]

Such an appeal was evidently considered unnecessary.[¶] Lastly, Herr von Jagow openly revealed his confidence to the French ambassador. At their meeting on the afternoon of 26 July, M. Jules Cambon, after pointing to the dangers of the situation, expressed the opinion that if war came, Great Britain would stand with Russia and France. "You may have your sources of information," the German minister replied. "We have ours; we are sure of England's neutrality."* Such an avowal provides the real clue to German policy.

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[*] Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 201.

[†] It is difficult to believe that King George, a constitutional sovereign and a warm supporter of the Triple Entente, made such a statement. But it was firmly believed by the German Emperor when he learned of it, and had important consequences. See below, pp. 155, 188.

[‡] Naval attaché in London to navy office, telegram, 26 July; G 207. A copy was sent to the foreign office; the chancellor was notified directly by the navy office.

[§] Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 26 July; G 221. The Emperor's comment suggests that he was anticipating war. "There is a Russian fleet! In the Baltic there are now five Russian torpedo boat flotillas engaged in practice cruises, which as a whole or in part can be at the Belts within sixteen hours and close them. Port Arthur should be a lesson! My fleet has orders to sail for Kiel, and to Kiel it is going to sail!"

[||] Footnote to G 234.

[¶] It is worth noting that the second telegram sent to St. Petersburg warning against military measures (G 219; see above, pp. 8–9) spoke only of a war involving Russia and France and did not mention Great Britain.

The next day Albert Ballin returned from his mission to London. He had got the impression that "a fairly capable German diplomat might even then succeed in bringing about an understanding with Great Britain and France which, by preventing Russia from striking, would result in preserving peace."

> Great Britain and the leading British politicians [he said] were absolutely in favor of peace, and the French Government was so much against war that its representatives in London seemed to him to be rather nervous [*"sehr klein"*] on the subject. They would, he thought, do anything in their power to prevent war. England, however, was pledged to France to assist her against an unprovoked attack, and would certainly not allow us to march through Belgium, according to the old plan of campaign. It was quite true that the Austrian note had caused grave anxiety in London, but how earnestly the cabinet was trying to preserve peace might be gauged by the fact that Churchill, when he took leave of Ballin, implored him, almost with tears in his eyes, "My dear friend, do not let us go at [*sic*] war."†

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* Recouly, p. 23. Cambon's statement was clearly an attempt to bluff Jagow, for when he reported the conversation to Goschen, the latter remarked, "I think just as you do concerning the attitude of my country; *unfortunately, I am not authorized to say so.*" At the same time, it is probable that Cambon believed what he had said to Jagow, for he talked in the same strain to a Serbian diplomatist. "If Germany lets matters come to war, she will find England also against her; the British fleet will blockade the German ports and enter the port of Hamburg in three weeks. The French generals declare that they will beat Germany hollow." M. Bogichevich, *Les causes de la guerre* (Paris, 1925), pp. 148–149. According to Bogichevich, (*ibid.*, pp. 136–137), Cambon also stated that "before the publication of the Austrian ultimatum, *Sir Edward Grey had already declared to Prince Lichnowsky that in case a conflict over Serbia broke out between Russia and France on the one side and Germany and Austria on the other, England could not disinterest herself.*" Neither the British nor the German documents contain any such statement by Grey prior to 24 July.

† Huldermann, *Albert Ballin*, pp. 301–302. On this same day, a letter written by Ballin to Jagow from London on 24 July was received at the foreign office; G 254. He said that Grey had assured him that the friendly relations between Great Brit-

Ballin's report would hardly alter Herr von Jagow's optimistic view of British policy.* If Great Britain intended to remain neutral, why should a British proposal be accepted which aimed to prevent Austria-Hungary from marching into Serbia? But what of Russia?

The news from Russia was, as a matter of fact, rather encouraging than otherwise. The ambassador in St. Petersburg reported that on Sunday he had found M. Sazonov "much quieter and more conciliatory." The Russian minister professed "with the utmost fervor" his desire to avoid war; and while he asserted that Russia could not tolerate the reduction of Serbia to a state of vassalage, he no longer talked of a European revision of the Austro-Hungarian investigation in Serbia, but, said Count Pourtalès, "seems taken up with the idea of a mediation in which Germany and Italy could play a part."† Indeed, he had gone so far as to promise to propose direct conversations to Count Berchtold. Count Pourtalès' impression was that M. Sazonov, "perhaps as the result of information from London and Paris, has lost some of his nerve and is now looking for a way out."‡ Court circles were also reported to be anxious for peace.§ If M. Sazonov's admission that "certain military preparations, in order to avoid surprise, had already been made"|| was disquieting, it was offset by the as-

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ain and Germany which had developed out of the Haldane mission of 1912 were unimpaired and had "even become strengthened" by the co-operation of the two governments during the Balkan troubles. While the British foreign secretary had defended the Triple Entente as necessary for the balance of power in Europe, he had said, in answer to Ballin's question about the Anglo-Russian naval convention, that "no such naval convention existed, and that it was not England's intention to agree to any such convention."

* Later in the day the secret service reported that "in Hull and the Medway district, no preparations are being made which would point to preparations for war." Admiralty staff to Jagow, 27 July; G 255.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 217. This was confirmed by a message from Tschirschky that Szápáry had reported in the same sense (Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; A II 41). Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 229. Tschirschky added: "Even Sazonov's exclamation, 'If Austria-Hungary devours Serbia, Russia will go to war with her,' is taken to indicate that Russia will not go beyond diplomatic action" (!).

‡ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 238.

§ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 229.

|| Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 230.

surances of the minister of war to the German military attaché that "not a horse was being requisitioned, not a reservist called up" and that "in no circumstances would the military districts on the German frontier be mobilized." Furthermore, in the opinion of the attaché, the "internal situation is also plainly a cause of deep concern."* In face of these reports the German Government may well have thought that Russia, at any rate for the moment, was not in earnest.† It can hardly be blamed if its agents in St. Petersburg mistook the calmness of the Russian Government and its readiness to negotiate for lack of resolution and weakness.

So it is not surprising, in the light of the reports received from London and St. Petersburg, that on the morning of 27 July a rosy picture of the situation was telegraphed to the Emperor, who was on his way from Kiel to Berlin.

> Austria [said the chancellor] does not appear to be able to enter upon military action before 12 August, and Serbia apparently intends to confine herself to the defensive. Serbia's answer to the ultimatum, the text of which we have not been able to get hold of, is said to agree to nearly all the points, even the punishment of all officers, besides an order to the army; collaboration only with certain reservations. The diplomatic situation is not entirely clear. England and France desire peace, Italy likewise, as the question at issue is unpopular and is alleged to be prejudicial to Italian interests. According to the latest reports, Russia seems not to be mobilizing as yet and to be willing to open negotiations with Vienna about reasonable modification of the demands not yet satisfactorily accepted by Serbia. Vienna's attitude on this point so far unknown. I have had all the cabinets informed that we regard the Austro-Serbian conflict as a matter which concerns only those two states, and have called Russia's attention very emphatically to the consequences of any military measures which may be directed against us.‡

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July, received 27 July; G 242.

† Jagow informed Bucharest that "news from Russia is more or less disturbing." Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 26 July; G 214. This was probably intended to impress the Rumanian Government, for his conduct later in the day did not indicate any such anxiety.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 27 July, 11.20 A.M.; G 245.

As it stands, this statement creates the impression that the German Government expected a slow development of the crisis, and looked forward to a period of diplomatic manœuvring. But the chancellor did not inform the Emperor that pressure was being exerted on Vienna to accelerate its action, and, more striking still, he did not say a word about the proposal for a conference.*

This fact certainly calls for remark. It is possible that the omission is to be explained by the knowledge that the Emperor was opposed to mediation;† still, that does not seem a sufficient reason for concealing such an important suggestion from him. One cannot help wondering whether the chancellor was anxious to get the question of the conference settled before the Emperor returned, as if he feared a *volte face* on the part of his master, who was beginning to get nervous.‡

During the morning, presumably before making his decision about the conference, Herr von Bethmann had a long consultation with General von Moltke, the chief of the general staff,§

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* This was not the first time that information was withheld from the Emperor. The following statement from Pourtalès of his conversation with Sazonov (Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 24 July; G 148) was omitted when the telegram was relayed to William: "The ambassador's reference to the common monarchical interests of the conservative Powers as well as his appeal to the minister's monarchical feelings evoked no response from M. Sazonov. The monarchical principle, said the minister, had nothing to do with the matter in hand." Lichnowsky's statement that in London "they also claim to know that Rumania's attitude is more than uncertain" (Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 24 July; G 157) and Pourtalès' remark that in speaking with Sazonov he had avoided "everything that might have the appearance of a threat" (Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 160) were not transmitted. When Lichnowsky's telegram (G 236) with reference to the conference was finally (in the afternoon of 27 July, after the rejection of the conference) communicated to the Emperor, several important passages were left out, especially Lichnowsky's "urgent warning against believing any further in the possibility of localization." It looks as if the foreign office was concealing from the Emperor unfavorable news which might cause him to waver in his resolution to support Austria. This suspicion is strengthened by its handling of the Serbian reply (see below, pp. 62–63).

† When he heard of Grey's first suggestion of mediation between Austria and Russia (G 157; see above, I, 493), he wrote: "This is superfluous, as Austria has already made matters plain to Russia, and Grey has nothing else to propose. I will not join in it unless Austria expressly asks me to do so, which is not likely." These remarks were telegraphed to the Wilhelmstrasse on 26 July, and arrived there on the following day.

‡ Particularly about the fleet. William II to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 231.

§ Moltke, *Erinnerungen, Briefe, Dokumente*, p. 381. After the conference, Moltke wrote to his wife at Bayreuth: "The situation continues to be far from clear, nor who had returned to Berlin on the previous day. Whether the chief of staff was an advocate of 'preventive' war, in the sense that he desired to precipitate a conflict, is still a debated question,* and it is to be remembered that the crisis of July, 1914, was not of Moltke's making, for he had not been consulted by William II and Bethmann-Hollweg when they gave their promise to Austria-Hungary. Nevertheless there is ground for thinking that he was not in the least averse to a trial of strength if a satisfactory issue was provided. "Months" before he was said to have made the statement that "from a military point of view so favorable a moment could not come again in any calculable time," because of the superiority of the German infantry rifle and artillery and the "wholly insufficient training of the French army."† In a similar vein he had remarked to a retired German diplomatist in June, 1914, that "the sooner things boil over, the better for us."‡

When General von Moltke returned to Berlin on 26 July, the one tangible fact in the situation was the rupture between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, which was obviously the prelude to a war between the two countries. Now as far back as 1909 he had expressed the opinion to General Conrad that an Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia would usher in a European war—*"der grosse Krieg,"* as he called it,§ and so far as one can judge from his subsequent correspondence and con-

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will it clear up very quickly. Fourteen days must still elapse before anything definite can be known or stated." Evidently he was referring to the fact that Austria would not be able to move before 12 August, but the statement offers no clew to his point of view or state of mind.

* T. von Schäfer, "Wollte Generaloberst v. Moltke den Präventivkrieg?" (answered in the negative), in *KSF*, V, 543–561 (June, 1927); reply (in the affirmative), by H. Lutz, "Generaloberst von Moltke und der Präventivkrieg," *ibid.*, V, 1107–1120 (November, 1927).

† Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 31 July; Dirr, p. 176.

‡ Eckardstein, *Die Isolierung Deutschlands*, p. 184. In this estimate of the military situation, he appears to have reckoned on the participation of Italy on the side of Austria-Hungary and Germany. In November, 1914, he wrote that the German-Italian military convention of March, 1914, according to which two Italian army corps and three cavalry divisions were allocated to the German armies operating in France, had persuaded him that "the loyalty of Italy was not open to doubt." Moltke, p. 9. In May of the same year he told Conrad that "he was convinced of the genuine loyalty of Italian official circles and especially of General Pollio" (the Italian chief of staff). Conrad, III, 671.

§ See above, I, 15.

versations with the chief of the Austro-Hungarian general staff, he did not change his mind. Whether Moltke approved the policy which had been adopted on 5 and 6 July is uncertain,* but the question is really immaterial. On 26 July he was presented with a *fait accompli* (so far as can be determined from the available evidence) : an invasion of Serbia was only a matter of days, and Moltke, brushing aside the diplomatic subtleties and balanced calculations of the foreign office, drew the conclusion that a European war was at hand. Since he preferred to fight such a war then rather than later, his plain duty was to prepare for war, and this he proceeded to do.

On this same day, 26 July, he took two steps to that end. In the first place, he represented to Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg that he deemed it "urgently necessary that Italy be held fast to the Triple Alliance."† How to do this was the chancellor's task, not his; he had made his arrangements with the Italian general staff, which could be put into operation if the Italian Government was so minded, but he could not directly influence the decisions of Rome.‡ Secondly, he drafted and sent to the foreign office an ultimatum for presentation to the Belgian Government at the appropriate moment. This step, taken before any military move by Austria-Hungary or any mobilization by Russia, and the statement in the document that the German Government was in receipt of "reliable information" concerning "the intention of France, after junction with an English expeditionary force, to advance against Germany through Belgian territory,"§ were of the greatest significance. The entire strategic plan of the German general staff depended, as will be explained in a subsequent chapter, on the seizure of Liège by a *coup de main,* and it was necessary to have ready a summons to present to Belgium at the last moment as an excuse for the violation of her neutrality.[*] Consequently the drafting of this summons offers strong circumstantial support for the belief that the chief of staff regarded war as imminent. Whether his action can be interpreted as an indication of a desire to force the issue, is an open question. But we may be very sure that if he had considered a European war dangerous to Germany from a military point of view, he would have let the fact be known, and there would be indications of it in his own conduct and in the evidence at our disposal. One is bound to conclude that in the conference between General von Moltke and Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg on the morning of 27 July, the chief of staff did not object to the policy which the German Government was pursuing.

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* According to one account, he said to a friend in November, 1914, that "in view of the general military situation he would have warned against giving Austria-Hungary a free hand for a diplomatic action against Serbia out of which the great war might arise." T. von Schäfer, "Generaloberst von Moltke in den Tagen vor der Mobilmachunge and seine Einwirkung auf Oesterreich-Ungarn," in *KSF*, IV, 515 (August, 1926). On the other hand, his own memorandum written in November, 1914, reflects the view that Germany had been bound to support the Dual Monarchy in the latter's struggle with Serbia. Moltke, pp. 12-15.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 26 July; G 202.

‡ There is no evidence that Moltke entered into communication with the Italian general staff; but it must be remembered that the papers of the German general staff have not been published.

§ G 376 and footnotes. The apologist of the German general staff, General H. von Kuhl, *Der deutsche Generalstab in Vorbereitung und Durchführung des Welt-*

A few minutes after sending his report to the Emperor, the chancellor telegraphed to Paris that "we cannot mediate in the conflict between Austria and Serbia";[†] and without waiting for a consultation, although William was expected to reach Potsdam at almost any moment, he despatched a formal refusal to London.[‡] The telegram was almost peremptory in the finality with which the British proposal was rejected:

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krieges (Berlin, 1920), admits that there was no such "reliable information." "Reliable information [*sicheres Material*] about the concentration and operative plans of the French were naturally not at our disposal. As bases there could be used only the expression of numerous military writers, notices in the press, discussions in the Chamber and Senate and the like" (pp. 35–36). Though stating that the general staff was convinced that "the neutrality of Belgium had long since been abandoned by the Belgians" (p. 45), the only definite evidence he offers is that according to the *Journal des sciences militaires*, in 1913, "much cavalry, almost the whole of the French cavalry," would be found on the extreme left wing of the French army, wherefore the German general staff "had to assume that it was intended to move toward Belgium and Luxemburg" (pp. 46–47). The German official history, *Der Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1925—), I, 66, says that "reliable information about the French concentration at the beginning of the war was not available."

[*] Moltke's affirmation about the intentions of France and England was not in any way the real reason for the invasion of Belgium, for that plan had been formed in the eighteen nineties, when French strategy was based on the defensive, and before the creation of a British expeditionary force.

[†] Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, 27 July, 11.30 A. M.; G 247.

[‡] Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 27 July, 1 P. M.; G 248.

> We could not [it ran] participate in such a conference, as we cannot summon Austria before a European court of justice in her business with Serbia. Sir Edward Grey makes a sharp distinction, as your Excellency has expressly reported, between Austro-Serbian and Austro-Russian conflict, and is concerned about the former just as little as ourselves. Our mediating activity must be confined to a possible Austro-Russian conflict.

The chancellor went on to say that according to the reports from Count Pourtalès, a direct understanding between St. Petersburg and Vienna "appears to me to be feasible," and he instructed the ambassador "most urgently to advocate in London the necessity and the possibility of localization."* Now there was nothing in the British proposal which suggested a "court of justice" or a "court of arbitration" (as Herr von Jagow called it), and the German statesmen were aware of the fact; for when the British ambassador in Berlin protested that Sir Edward Grey's "idea had nothing to do with arbitration," Herr von Jagow did not answer him and only said that a conference was "not practicable."† And not content with giving an insincere reason for declining the British proposal, the German Government made it clear that the real reason for its refusal was, as Herr von Jagow said, that "news from St. Petersburg had caused him to take a more hopeful view of the general situation"—which was a diplomatic way of saying that in the opinion of Berlin, Russian opposition could be discounted and the Austro-Hungarian programme carried through to fruition without interference. Whether this frank avowal is to be attributed to clumsiness or to arrogance, will be a matter of opinion and is of small consequence. The essential point is that at noon of 27 July Herr von Bethmann—so the evidence implies—felt so sure of British neutrality that he bluntly refused a British proposal which threatened to interfere with the Austro-Hungarian advance into Serbia.

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* After the war the former chancellor wrote concerning the proposal: "It was an attempt of the Triple Entente to bring the Austro-Serbian dispute before the tribunal of Europe or rather before that of the Entente. For no one could suppose that the German member of the conference could have made head against those of England and France, both devoted to Russo-Serbian interests, and against the Italians. No impartiality could have been expected from such a tribunal." Bethmann, I, 134. This explanation is probably sincere in so far as it reveals the fear that Lichnowsky would have worked for a compromise; but the argument that England would necessarily support Serbia comes rather strangely from a statesman whose policy up to the moment of refusal was based on the belief that England would restrain Russia, and who was constantly appealing to her to do so.

† Goschen to Grey, telegram, 27 July; G 185. The phrase "court of justice" may have been inspired by Pourtalès, who had told Sazonov that Austria could not submit the results of her inquiry to "a European tribunal" [*Areopag*]. Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 160.

"To Fight the Business Through"

The German Emperor reached Potsdam in the early afternoon and at three o'clock gathered his principal advisers together—the chief of his cabinet, the chancellor, the foreign minister, and the chiefs of the general and naval staffs. This meeting is not mentioned in any published document nor in the memoirs of any of the participants,* but the biographer of General von Falkenhayn has lifted the veil. The minister of war, he states, "learned *'unter der Hand'* that it was decided to fight the business through [*die Sache durchzufechten*], cost what it might."†

"To fight the business through"! At noon the reply of the Serbian Government to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum had been handed to Herr von Jagow.‡ But the indications are that it was kept from the Emperor until the next morning,§ when, as will be seen, he was fairly bowled over on reading it. Possibly the delay can be explained by the fact that the document was received in the form of a "scarcely legible telegram" and had to be multigraphed in the foreign office; but in view of the complete change of attitude which William manifested when he had read the text, it is most unlikely that at the conference in Potsdam he was given a full account of the document,* although he had been told that it was "said to agree on nearly all the points, including the punishment of all officers."†

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* Except that in Moltke, p. 381, there is a letter from the chief of staff to his wife stating that he had been summoned.

† Zwehl, p. 56. Zwehl expresses a personal doubt whether the decision was "*ganz zutreffend*"; but the subsequent events of the day prove, as it seems to the writer, the accuracy of the information which reached Falkenhayn. The meeting is also mentioned by A. von Tirpitz, *Politische Dokumente* (Hamburg, 1926), II, 2. Neither he nor Falkenhayn was summoned, one must presume, because the question to be decided was not one immediately affecting their departments, which were concerned with the administration of the army and navy, but a matter of high policy, on which the chiefs of staff were the responsible advisers.

‡ "Noon" is the time mentioned by the Austrian ambassador. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 66. The French ambassador understood that the reply had been delivered "this morning." Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 74. The copy in the German archives is marked as having been received in the afternoon of 27 July (G 270, 271, notes). This is quite natural, for some time would elapse between the handing in of the document to Jagow and its receipt by the registering office.

§ It was sent to him by special messenger at 9.30 P. M., on 27 July (G 270, note 2), but he did not read it until the next morning.

Nor is this the only circumstance worthy of consideration. Shortly before the conference news had been received from Rome that according to the information of the Marquis di San Giuliano, "Serbia would be willing to agree to the Austrian demands if they were presented by Europe."‡ Here was a precise suggestion, surely worth exploring in the interests of peace. But the German Emperor's comment was "Rot!"§ and the German foreign office failed to transmit it to Vienna or to the other capitals. The truth, of course, is that the chancellor and the foreign minister, having urged Count Berchtold to expedite the beginning of military operations and having declined Sir Edward Grey's proposal which was intended to prevent military operations, would have stultified themselves if they had asked the Austro-Hungarian Government to hold its hand and negotiate. Such a *volte face* did not seem called for at that moment, far from it, and they did the logical thing: they decided "to fight the business through."

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* Later in the day Jagow told Cambon that he "had not yet had time" to read the Serbian reply. J. Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 74. Jagow's time had, no doubt, been taken up with attending the conference at Potsdam; but if he went to the conference without reading the reply, he is open to the severest reproaches and suspicions.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 27 July, 11.20 A. M.; G 245.

‡ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 27 July, received 1.28 P. M.; G 249. The British ambassador in Rome had similar information, from the Serbian minister, "provided some explanation could be given as to how points 5 and 6 of conditions would be applied." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 202. On the same day, Pachu, the Serbian minister of finance, spoke in a conciliatory manner to the German minister, and hinted that Serbia would like to know why her answer was not considered satisfactory by Austria. Freiherr von Griesinger, "Die kritischen Tagen in Serbien," *Deutsche Revue*, XLV, iv, 65 (October, 1920).

§ It is not known just when the Emperor saw this telegram, which was returned to the foreign office the next day, 28 July; but he must have read it, if his comment has any meaning, before he received the text of the Serbian reply early on 28 July.

It is in the light of this decision that Herr von Jagow's actions in the latter part of the afternoon have to be considered. He took four distinct steps. (1) He declined to adopt a suggestion of the French ambassador that "Great Britain, Germany, France, and Italy should advise Austria to refrain from every action which at the present moment might aggravate the existing situation."* On the contrary, (2) he informed the Austro-Hungarian ambassador of Herr von Tschirschky's report that the advance could not begin before 12 August and said that

> he regretted that the beginning of our [Austrian] military operations against Serbia must be postponed so long.†

(3) Not content with this pressure on Vienna, the German foreign minister treated in rather cavalier fashion the wish of M. Sazonov to enter into direct conversations with Count Berchtold, although the idea had emanated from Count Pourtalès and Herr von Jagow himself professed—to Sir Edward Goschen‡—to have great hopes of it. When the Russian chargé asked him to support the plan at Vienna, he said that

> he could not ask Austria to give way, but that the transmission of Pourtalès' telegram showed that he was recommending such a way out of the situation.§

Now this was the formula which had been used on the previous day to the British chargé with the object of misleading him,|| and the same purpose was again at work. For although the telegram of Count Pourtalès had been received at 12.45 A. M.

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* Bronevski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R 39. Cf. J. Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 74.

† Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, "quite secret," 27 July, 5.50 P. M.; A II 67. During the afternoon, probably after the conversation of Jagow and Szögyény, the news was received in Berlin that Austria had decided to issue the declaration of war against Serbia on the next day, or on the day following at the latest, "chiefly to forestall any attempt at intervention." Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July, received 4.37 P. M.; G 257. Cf. Szögyény's memorandum, reproducing a telegram from Berchtold (A II 62, 1), 27 July; G 268.

‡ See above, p. 61.

§ Bronevski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R, 1925 48.

|| See above, I, 523.

on 27 July, it was not forwarded until 4.35 P. M., and what is more, was forwarded in a garbled form, there being omitted this sentence:

> Should an agreement be the result [of the conversations], then Serbia (? could) be advised by Russia to accept the demands on the basis thus agreed upon between Austria and Russia, and to permit Austria to be notified of this through the agency of a third Power.*

Thus the essential feature of the Russian proposal was concealed from the Austro-Hungarian Government. It is not likely that knowledge of what Russia was disposed to concede would have made the slightest difference in the action of Vienna, which had already responded to the German pressure by taking the decision to declare war. But the duplicity of Herr von Jagow reveals once more the anxiety of the German Government lest Austria-Hungary find some excuse for not taking the final plunge to which Berlin was frantically urging her.

(4) An effort was made to hold Italy in line. In spite of the fact that Count Berchtold repudiated the Italian interpretation of the treaty,† Herr von Jagow, following up a cue from Herr von Tschirschky of "dropping the futile theoretical discussions about the interpretations of Article VII,"‡ bluntly told the Austro-Hungarian ambassador that he expected Count Berchtold to accept the principle of compensation "without reference to Article VII," for this would "quiet Italy."§ To prepare the

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* Footnote on G 238.

† Conversation of Berchtold with Tschirschky, 26 July; A II 63. Berchtold communicated his views to Szögyény (telegram, 26 July; A II 51), who informed Jagow the following day.

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 212.

§ Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 65. Jagow informed Tschirschky that "an immediate conference" between Berchtold and Avarna was "urgently necessary," as San Giuliano was "much worried" by the Austrian attitude. Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 27 July; G 269. He added that the Emperor had given his "express command" for the ambassador to inform Berchtold that His Majesty considered it "absolutely necessary that Austria should come to an understanding with Italy about Article VII and the question of compensation *in time*." Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 27 July; G 267. This appears to have been the first step taken by the Emperor in the direction of policy after his return from Norway.

way in Rome for such an overture, he telegraphed to the German ambassador there:

> Please point out that it is just in the solidarity of the Triple Alliance that there lies the surest guarantee for a solution of the crisis corresponding to its interests.*

Finally, in order to impress the British Government and to take the wind out of Prince Lichnowsky's sails, he informed the ambassador that

> Italian Government has promised attitude of a friendly ally at Vienna† and made a similar communication here.‡

If the statement gave a false notion of the real Italian attitude, it reflected the confidence and even the recklessness of the German Government.§

On the military side, however, the action was quite circumspect. Since the general staff had declared itself "all prepared" with "nothing to do,"|| not much was done on this day, at least outwardly. A telegram was sent to the military attaché in St. Petersburg stating that "no military measures were contemplated in Germany";¶ nor was anything actually done beyond ordering the troops which had not gone out to manœuvres to be kept in barracks and taking the preliminary steps for protecting the railway lines.** This cautious policy was required, it may be noted, both by the official policy of

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* Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 27 July; G 273.

† The Italian declaration did state that Italy intended "to maintain toward the Monarchy a friendly attitude in consonance with the obligations of the alliance."

‡ Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 27 July; G 272.

§ On this day, the German ambassador in Rome told his Bulgarian colleague that "the present moment is extraordinarily favorable to Germany to have it out with Russia and France, and Austria will not have peace and security until she conquers Serbia." Rizov to Radoslavov, 27 July, *KSF*, VI, 247 (March, 1928).

|| See above, I, 309.

¶ *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, 57.

** The task was left to the railway administration; the order was apparently not put into effect until the next day. German reports of French preparations on 27 July included the recall of officers from leave, the breaking off of manœuvres by the 14th corps, measures for the close observation of the frontier and the collection of rolling stock for troop transport in the stations of Toul, Nancy, and Maubeuge. *Deutschland Schuldig?* no. 7, Anlage ii. For the steps actually taken by the French, see above, pp. 18–19.

'localization' and by the desirability of leaving the initiative in military preparations—up to a certain point—to the Entente Powers.* But General von Falkenhayn would hardly have issued an order on this day for the purchase of grain in the areas of military concentration† if mobilization had not been under consideration and regarded as probable. It is also not without significance that the minister of the interior, Herr von Delbrück, urged the bürgermeister of Berlin to see to it that "Berlin is sufficiently provisioned for any event," and that he pointed out to the Bavarian minister how important it was that "everything should be avoided which would make it appear abroad as if Germany was forcing the war."‡ If the military measures taken by Germany, so far as is known, were less extensive than those of Russia and France,§ one suspects that "intellectual preparations" (to recall Admiral Behncke's phrase) for war had gone rather far in Germany by the evening of 27 July.

Yet one other incident of the day remains to be recorded. General von Chelius, the German Emperor's representative at the Tsar's court, had reported that in the opinion of many officers of the court, "a telegram from His Majesty the Emperor and King to the Emperor Nicholas would prove the surest means of maintaining peace."* Accordingly a telegram in English was drafted in the foreign office for William to send to Nicholas. It stated the familiar argument that "the Austro-Serbian conflict concerns only Austria and Serbia," and appealed to the "common interest of me and you and in fact of all monarchs that this crime [the murder of Francis Ferdinand] and all that are morally responsible for it, should receive the punishment it deserves."† But the telegram was never sent. "His Majesty," noted Herr von Bethmann, "wishes to send *no* despatch to the Tsar for the present."‡ The course set was still maintained.

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* Jagow seems to have been looking ahead to the moment when Germany would have to take military measures. He told Goschen that "as yet Austria was only partially mobilizing, but that if Russia mobilized against Germany latter would have to follow suit." Goschen asked him "what he meant by 'mobilizing against Germany.' " Jagow replied that "if Russia only mobilized in south Germany would not mobilize, but if she mobilized in north Germany would have to do so too, and Russian system of mobilization was so complicated that it might be difficult exactly to locate her mobilization. Germany would therefore have to be very careful not to be taken by surprise." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 185. Jagow's remarks left the German Government free to interpret Russian military measures as it liked.

† Zwehl, p. 56. Cf. also Delbrück, *Die wirtschaftliche Mobilmachung in Deutschland 1914*, p. 102.

‡ Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 29 July; Dirr, p. 158. Delbrück added, it should be stated, that "the question of peace and war had not been decided."

§ The French, of course, believe that many measures were taken secretly. See above, pp. 17–18. There is no doubt that as early as 26 July the commander of the 16th corps at Metz, acting on his own proper authority, had sent light artillery and machine guns to the western area of this fortress and Diedenhofen, instituted night patrols, and stopped the granting of leave. *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 101–102, footnote. On 27 July soldiers of the Bavarian contingent of the Metz garrison who had been granted leave for the harvest were recalled. *Deutschland Schuldig?* p. 71. These steps doubtless explain the remark of Colonel Dupont, of the French general staff, that "significant" measures had been taken at Metz. *Ibid.*, p. 74; G 372.

GERMANY'S CHANGE OF FRONT

Late, very late, on the evening of 27 July, the attitude of the German chancellor underwent a certain change. Without doubt, the cause was the news received from London. The decision to support Austria-Hungary had been made on the hypothesis that Great Britain would not take an active interest and that if a general war resulted from the Austrian expedition against Serbia, Germany would be able to deal with Russia and France. But to have to fight Great Britain was another matter. During the day it was learned that the British fleet had been kept together: "this changed the situation with a single stroke," says the German official history.§ Equally disturbing was the tone of Prince Lichnowsky's messages.

The reply of the Serbian Government to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum was read to the British foreign office on the morning of 27 July. In the opinion of Sir Arthur Nicolson,

> It practically concedes all the Austrian demands, and it is difficult to see how Austria can honestly proceed to hostile operations when Servia has yielded so much.||

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 229.

† G 233. ‡ Note on G 229. § Groos, *Der Krieg in der Nordsee*, I, 13.

|| Memorandum of Nicolson, 27 July; B 171. When Sir Eyre Crowe had read the text the next day, he minuted: "The answer is reasonable. If Austria demands absolute compliance with her ultimatum it can only mean that she wants a war."

So when Prince Lichnowsky came about noon to inform Sir Edward Grey that his government accepted in principle mediation between Austria-Hungary and Russia and to request that British influence be used at St. Petersburg to localize the war,* the British foreign secretary replied that

> the Servian reply went further than could have been expected to meet the Austrian demands . . . could hardly have gone as far as it did unless Russia had exercised conciliatory influence at Belgrade, and it was really at Vienna that moderating influence was now required . . . Servian reply should at least be treated as a basis for discussion and pause.

He went on to say that if Austria persisted in her course, "other issues might be raised that would supersede the dispute between Austria and Servia, and would bring other Powers in, and the war would be the biggest ever known." But as long as Germany would work to keep the peace, he would "keep closely in touch."†

Lichnowsky understood perfectly. He reported Grey's language at length, and then said:

> I found the minister irritated for the first time. He spoke with great seriousness and seemed absolutely to expect that we should successfully make use of our influence to settle the matter . . . I am convinced that in case it should come to war in the end [*jetzt doch noch*] we should no longer be able to count on British sympathy or British support. . . . Everybody here is convinced, and I hear it also from the mouths of my colleagues, that the key to the situation lies in Berlin, and that if people there really want peace, they will have to restrain Austria from pursuing, as Sir E. Grey expresses it, a foolhardy policy.‡

The ambassador followed this up with two more telegrams which reached Berlin at 8.40 P. M. If, he said, the British Government, with the help of Germany, succeeded in preserving peace, he would guarantee that "our relations with Great Britain will remain, for an incalculable time, of the same intimate and confidential character that has distinguished them for the last year and a half." But the opinion was becoming general that "the whole Serbian question has devolved into a test of strength between the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente," and if Austria-Hungary endeavored "to crush Serbia," then

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 25 July; G 192. The ambassador had informed Nicolson of this the evening before.

† Grey to Goschen, telegram, 27 July; B 176.

‡ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July, received 4.37 P. M. G 258.

> England, I am certain, will place herself unconditionally on the side of France and Russia, in order to show that she is not disposed to permit the moral, or indeed the military, defeat of her group.*

How, asked the frantic ambassador, who now knew that the conference had been declined by Berlin, could he argue for the localization of the conflict "when nobody here has any doubt that important Russian interests are placed in jeopardy by Austria's procedure and that Russia will be compelled to intervene, even against her own desire"? What Grey wished to avoid was an armed attack on Serbia "because he fears that it will lead to a disturbance of the peace of Europe."†

These were serious words, even if allowance were made for Prince Lichnowsky's possible *parti-pris*. Accordingly at 11.50 P. M., the ambassador's first telegram, reporting his conversation with Sir Edward Grey, was forwarded to Vienna. Herr von Bethmann then added this paragraph:

> Since we have already refused one English proposal for a conference, it is impossible for us to put aside *a limine* this English suggestion also. By refusing every proposal for mediation, we should be held responsible for the conflagration by the whole world and be represented as the veritable instigators of the war. That would also make our position impossible in our own country, where we must appear as being forced into the war. Our situation is all the more difficult since Serbia has

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 265.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 266.

apparently yielded so much. Therefore we cannot decline the rôle of mediator, and must submit the English proposal to the consideration of the Vienna Cabinet, since London and Paris continue to use their influence in Petersburg. I request Count Berchtold's opinion of the English suggestion, and of M. Sazonov's wish to negotiate directly with Vienna as well.*

This *démarche* unquestionably signified a certain change of front: the German Government now recognized the necessity, politically speaking, of acquiescing in a proposal for mediation. But the chancellor's language suggests that he was more concerned with putting Russia in the wrong than with preventing action by Austria-Hungary. He did not retract the demand for immediate military operations or object to the declaration of war which he now knew Austria-Hungary intended to issue immediately. He spoke of war as a thing imminent, a war in which Germany would be taking part. Yet he did not advise Count Berchtold to *accept* the British proposal, but only to express an opinion on it—"it will be Austria's business to determine what to do about it," so he informed the Emperor.† In short, he proposed no change of course, but only a discussion of mediation while proceeding to the *fait accompli.* Moreover, he omitted the last sentence of Prince Lichnowsky's telegram, which read:

> Everybody here [London] is convinced, and I hear it also from the mouths of my colleagues, that the key to the situation lies in Berlin, and that if people there really want peace they will have to restrain Austria from pursuing, as Sir E. Grey expresses it, a foolhardy policy.

By such devices Herr von Bethmann was able, as it were, to assume the rôle of mediator without doing any mediating. And there is strong reason for thinking that the *démarche* was only a slippery trick to throw dust in the eyes of Sir Edward Grey.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 27 July· G 277.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 27 July; G 283.

At 9.15 P. M., two hours and a half before Bethmann's instructions were sent to Tschirschky, Count Szögyény telegraphed to Vienna about an interview which he had had with Herr von Jagow:

> The secretary of state declared to me in strict confidence but most emphatically that the German Government would shortly acquaint your Excellency with proposals from England looking toward mediation.
>
> The German Government gives the most explicit assurances that it does not in any way identify itself with the proposals, that it is decidedly opposed to the idea of our considering them, and that it was transmitting them only out of regard for the English request.
>
> It proceeds from the point of view that it is of the greatest importance for England not to make common cause with Russia and France at the present moment. Therefore everything must be avoided that might break the connection between Germany and England which has thus far been working so well. If Germany now informs Sir E. Grey bluntly that it will not transmit to Austria-Hungary wishes of his which he expects German mediation to get considered by us, she will take the course just indicated, which must at all cost be avoided.
>
> Furthermore, to any request of that kind from England addressed to Vienna, the German Government will declare to it [*demselben*] in the most express fashion that it does not in any way support such requests for intervention and transmits them only to comply with the wishes of England.
>
> Thus yesterday the British Government, through the German ambassador in London and directly through its representative here, had approached him, the secretary of state, to induce him to support England's wishes for a modification of the note to Serbia. He, Jagow, had replied that he would indeed comply with Sir E. Grey's wish to forward England's request to your Excellency, but he himself could not support it, since the Serbian conflict was a question of prestige for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, in which Germany was also concerned.
>
> He, the secretary of state, had therefore communicated the note of Sir E. Grey to Herr von Tschirschky, but without giving him instructions to lay it before your Excellency; he had then been able to inform the British Cabinet that he did not

directly reject the British desire, but had even transmitted it to Vienna.*

In conclusion, the secretary of state reaffirmed his attitude, and in order to avoid any misunderstanding, requested me to assure your Excellency that although in the present case also he would come forward as mediator, he was absolutely opposed to the British wishes being taken into consideration.†

This famous telegram has been the subject of intense controversy. It has been pointed out that no request was made to Berlin by the British Government, as stated by Count Szögyény, that it should urge upon Vienna a modification of the ultimatum,‡ and the error is held to be proof of the ambassador's unreliability; but in view of the many misunderstandings which occurred during the crisis, one error is hardly sufficient to impugn an entire document, nor can it be proved that it was the ambassador rather than the secretary of state who made the slip. It has been argued that the statement ascribed to Herr von Jagow in paragraph 4 is in contradiction to the essential notion of the first three paragraphs, that is, if "it" in paragraph 4 refers to England. But "it" may just as well mean Vienna, in which case the statement is consistent with the language of paragraph 7. The suggestion has also been made that the proposals of mediation mentioned in paragraph 1 were not the proposal that the Serbian reply should be taken as a basis of discussion, but the proposal for a conference.§ But it seems altogether improbable that the German Government, which had decided on the morning of 27 July to reject the proposal for a conference, and had notified its decision to the British Government, would communicate the proposal to Vienna in order to be able to inform London that it had done so. Such procedure would be utterly pointless.

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* It will be remembered that Zimmermann told Rumbold that "very fact of their making this communication to Austro-Hungarian Government implies that they associate themselves to a certain extent with your hope." See above, I, 523.

† Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July, received in Vienna, 9 A. M., 28 July; A II 68.

‡ What the British Government requested was that Berlin should influence Vienna to take a favorable view of the Serbian reply. See above, I, 516.

§ Fay, II, 414–416. It is argued that Szögyény must have had his conversation with Jagow about noon, on the ground that there was not time between the return of Jagow from Potsdam (the hour of his return is not known, but the confer-

Herr von Jagow has denied that he used the language attributed to him by Count Szögyény.* Unfortunately, the numerous untruths uttered by him about his knowledge of the ultimatum must wholly disqualify him as a witness, especially on a point where he is the defendant. As a matter of fact, the Szögyény telegram is not inconsistent with Herr von Bethmann's note to Vienna, which did not recommend the acceptance of the British proposal. Moreover, there is positive evidence that the telegram reflected accurately the sentiment of the German foreign minister, for he drafted the next day a despatch to be sent to the Prussian representatives at the German courts, in which he said:

> The reply of the Serbian Government . . . goes to show meanwhile that the ruling authorities in Serbia are not inclined to abandon the policy which they have hitherto pursued or their efforts to stir up agitation. Accordingly there will be no course left for the Austro-Hungarian Government, unless it is willing finally to sacrifice its position as a Great Power, but to enforce its demands by strong pressure and, if necessary, by resort to military measures.†

This statement is surely proof that the *démarche* in Vienna was for form's sake only, in order to be able to say to Great Britain that the German Government had taken a step at Vienna, and to Vienna that Berlin had no sympathy with Sir Edward Grey's suggestion.

Yet the contrary impression was conveyed to London. In-

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ence there began around 3 P. M.) and 9.15 P. M. for him to read the telegram from Lichnowsky, and see Szögyény and for the latter to put his telegram into cipher. It may be noted, however, that of the five telegrams from Szögyény printed in the Austrian documents (the serial numbers show that several have not been printed), four (A II 64–67) were sent from Berlin between 4.20 and 5.50 P. M.; these evidently contain the information obtained by Szögyény at noon. The fact that the telegram under discussion was not sent until 9.15 suggests that there was a later conversation between Szögyény and Jagow.

* *Deutschland Schuldig?* p. 80.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to the Prussian ministers, 28 July; G 307.

stead of saying, as Herr von Jagow perhaps promised Count Szögyény would be done, that the German Government "does not support the request for intervention but only passes it on to comply with the wishes of England," Herr von Bethmann telegraphed to Prince Lichnowsky: "We have at once inaugurated a move for mediation at Vienna in the sense desired by Sir E. Grey."* This he represented as "a great concession," and "I feel sure," said the chancellor, "that England will evaluate this accommodating move of ours as it deserves."† Sir Edward accepted the assurances of German co-operation, and in the expectation that this would bring about an Austro-Russian agreement, suspended his proposal for the conference.‡ Count Berchtold, for his part, returned his "best thanks" for the explanation of the German attitude,§ and asserted that "England's move was made too late," because war had already been declared||—which, as we shall see, was the case, but only because of a curious and suspicious circumstance.

The German *démarche,* then, was not an honest effort at mediation. Bethmann's position, it must be recognized, was extremely difficult. In view of the steady pressure on Austria-Hungary to act, he could not suddenly attempt to restrain her; yet in the face of Lichnowsky's warnings and the keeping together of the British fleet, he had at least to pretend to restrain her. But the course adopted by him was not honorable, and in the end, it only plunged him into deeper difficulties. The nemesis for 5 July was approaching.

AUSTRIA–HUNGARY DECLARES WAR, 28 JULY

From the moment of the rupture of diplomatic relations with Serbia, Count Berchtold's cue was to refuse all concessions. Although late on 27 July he did finally authorize Count Szápáry

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 27 July, 11.50 P. M.; G 278.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 28 July, 2 A. M.; G 279.

‡ "It is very satisfactory to hear from German Ambassador here (cf. Lichnowsky to Grey, 28 July; B 236) that German Government have taken action at Vienna." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 28 July; B 218.

§ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 28 July; A II 82.

|| Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 313.

to tell M. Sazonov that "as long as the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia remains localized, the Monarchy will refrain from all territorial acquisitions," yet this promise was not to be given "in a binding form."* Apparently in order to avoid seeing the Russian ambassador, he left town for the day (27 July), so that M. Schebeko was reduced to expounding the Russian view to Baron Macchio "in a perfectly friendly way."† When the ambassador was finally able to see Count Berchtold on 28 July, in order to present M. Sazonov's request for direct conversations, the minister refused point blank to "enter into any discussion about the terms of the Austro-Hungarian note," alleging that "public opinion had risen to such a pitch of excitement that the government, even if they wished it, could no longer consent to such a course."‡ Count Berchtold further alleged that "yesterday the Serbians began firing at our soldiers on the Hungarian frontier"—a provocation that would be met "in the only manner . . . suitable to the dignity of the Monarchy."§ The minister also put off seeing the British ambassador until the morning of 28 July, and then said "quietly, but firmly, that no discussion could be accepted on basis of Serbian note" and that war would be declared that day.||

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* Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 27 July, 10.20 P. M.; A II 75.

† Schebeko to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R 41. Cf. Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 199.

‡ Schebeko to Sazonov, telegram, 28 July; R 45. In a memorandum made the next day, Berchtold recorded that he had not declined conversations on questions "directly affecting the two cabinets," *i. e.*, anything but the Serbian question; A III 23. This *nuance* was the cause of considerable misunderstanding.

§ Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 28 July; A II 95.

|| Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 230. Berchtold to Mensdorff, telegram, 28 July; A II 90. Mensdorff had informed Berchtold of Lichnowsky's conviction that "if we march into Serbia, England will go over completely to the other camp." Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July, A II 71. To Mensdorff himself, Grey said that "he was greatly disillusioned because we were treating the Serbian answer as if it were a complete refusal," and gave the warning that "if we were determined to have war with Serbia under all circumstances, and were assuming that Russia would keep quiet, we were taking a great risk"; he, for his part, declined to ask Russia to influence Serbia to go further than she had gone. Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; A II 72. Cf. Grey to Bunsen, 27 July; B 188. Berchtold asked Mensdorff to remind Grey that Serbia had mobilized at 3 P. M. on 25 July, although the time limit of the ultimatum did not expire till six o'clock. "Up to then we had taken no military preparations, but the Serbian mobilization forced us to undertake them on a large scale." Berchtold to Mensdorff, telegram, 27 July; A II 89.

In this intransigent attitude, Count Berchtold, who, Tschirschky noted, "is in very good spirits and is proud of the countless telegrams of congratulations that are coming to him from all parts of *Germany,"*[*] was supported, not only by the German Government and the German ambassador,[†] but by the public opinion of the Monarchy. "Postponement or prevention of war with Servia would undoubtedly be a great disappointment in this country, which has gone wild with joy at prospect of war": so the British ambassador summarized the state of feeling.[‡] Crowds paraded the streets of the two capitals shouting "Down with Serbia," and other German and Magyar towns were soon affected.[§] In the press the Serbian reply was generally declared unsatisfactory, only the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* holding out against the tide of criticism. "Serbia willed the war," said the *Pester Lloyd* on 26 July; "her will be done." The possibility of foreign intervention was denied or defied. According to the *Neue Freie Presse* on 28 July,

> A policy which would make it necessary for us to invoke the favor of the St. Petersburg Cabinet, simply in order to be able to secure quiet and justice in the Balkans, would dry up the vital power of the Monarchy. A state which does not defend itself from such submissiveness must allow its beard to be pulled, its face to be spat upon.

In the public mind, then, the question was, not whether there should be war, but when.

Actually, Count Berchtold, as already noted,[||] had decided on 27 July, under pressure from the German Government, to declare war against Serbia on the following day or the day thereafter, and had notified Berlin accordingly. But he had done so with the proviso that actual military operations would not commence until the Austro-Hungarian forces were able to strike a decisive blow. This circumstance is an all-important factor in the subsequent development of the crisis. We have to put ourselves in the position of the Austro-Hungarian chief-of-staff, on whom would fall the responsibility for conducting the war against Serbia and who had consented reluctantly to the premature declaration of war.

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[*] Tschirschky to Jagow, private, 26 July; G 326.

[†] Tschirschky told Bunsen that "days of Pan-Slav agitation in Russia were over. Moscow was perfectly quiet, and everything depended on personality of Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who could easily resist, if he chose, pressure of a few newspapers. His Excellency did not think Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs would be so imprudent as to take step which would probably bring into melting-pot many frontier questions in which Russia was interested, such as Swedish, Polish, Ruthene, Roumanian, and Persian questions. Nor was France at all in a condition to face war." Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 150.

[‡] Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 175.

[§] List in Scott, p. 74, note. Prague, where there was a large German population, is also mentioned, and Lemberg (Polish).

[||] See above, p. 5.

Now the problem confronting General Conrad was a very real one. He and his government were determined that the war against Serbia should be, not a military demonstration nor a mere occupation of Serbian territory, but should result in a thoroughgoing military decision over the Serbian army. For this an overwhelming superiority of forces was required, and it was planned to concentrate no less than 412,000 men on the Serbian frontier, which would suffice if the Monarchy could deal with Serbia alone. But if Russia entered into the fray, the larger part of the Austro-Hungarian army would have to assemble in Galicia, and the forces on the Serbian front be cut down to 190,000 men, who could only stand on the defensive. It was the former plan which was ordered put into effect by the partial mobilization of 25 July, as the German general staff had been informed beforehand.* But the present warnings that Russia would intervene forced General Conrad to consider the danger in Galicia. If Germany could protect Austria-Hungary's rear by forbidding Russia to mobilize, the operations against Serbia could proceed; otherwise, the situation must be reconsidered. General von Moltke, with the approval of the German Emperor and the chancellor, had promised that if Russia attacked Austria-Hungary in the event of a war with Serbia, Germany would recognize the *casus foederis* and mobilize her army.† But he had made it clear from the beginning (1909)

* G 74; see above, I, 525.

† See above, I, 15.

that the bulk of the German army would be first sent against France, and that only after a decision in the west could important forces be transferred to the east: in the meantime, the twelve German divisions deployed in East Prussia would be fully absorbed in defending that province against a Russian attack. The chief of the Austro-Hungarian general staff had never been satisfied with this arrangement, but had never been able to change it; and at their last meeting in May, 1914, the two generals had reviewed and confirmed the existing agreement: in a war with Russia, twelve German divisions would be deployed in East Prussia, forty Austro-Hungarian in Galicia.* Thus Germany could offer no military protection against Russia at the outset of the campaign: for some five or six weeks Austria-Hungary would have to hold out with her own forces in Galicia against the Russians, who would be able to put fifty-five divisions in the field. Thus there was a grave risk in undertaking a campaign in full force against Serbia.

To cope with this situation, the Austrian chief of staff had worked out a very intricate scheme of mobilization, by which a partial mobilization against Serbia could be transformed into a general one against Russia, the two contingencies being known as 'Case B' [Balkan] and 'Case R' [Russian]. For 'Case B,' seven corps and various supplementary units were to be mobilized: the two in Bosnia (XV, XVI), one in Croatia (XIII), these three to undertake an offensive against Serbia along the Bosnian-Serbian frontier; two in Hungary (IV, Budapest, VII, Temesvar), and two in Bohemia (VIII, Prague, IX, Leitmeritz). An eighth corps (III, Graz) was also available, and was mobilized on 26 July.† In 'Case R,' the remaining eight corps‡ would also be mobilized and concentrated in Galicia.

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* Conrad, III, 669.

† At the request of Conrad, the ambassador in Rome was authorized to inform the Italian Government that as soon as mobilization was completed, the corps would be withdrawn from the frontier, that is, the Italian frontier. The ambassador was also informed personally that the XIV corps (Tirol) would not be mobilized. Conrad to Berchtold, 24 July; Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,632, 10,610.

‡ I, Cracow, X, Przemysl, XI, Lemberg; XII, Hermannstadt; V, Pressburg, VI, Kaschau; II, Vienna, XIV, Innsbruck.

But obviously these eight corps would not suffice to resist a Russian advance into Galicia, and would need to be reinforced by the Bohemian and Hungarian troops which were, under 'Case B,' earmarked for the operations against Serbia. To provide for this contingency, Conrad had arranged his plan of mobilization and concentration in such a way that *up to the end of the fifth day of mobilization* it would be possible to despatch these four Bohemian and Hungarian corps from their mobilization centres either to the Danube and Save rivers (along the northern frontier of Serbia) or to Galicia. But after the fifth day the railway movements to the Serbian front would be under way and would have to proceed until the concentration according to 'Case B' had been completed; only then could the transfer to the Russian front take place, which would involve a delay of some weeks in their arrival there. As the order of mobilization for the eight corps issued on 25 July made 28 July the first day of mobilization, the chief of staff would have to know by 1 August whether he must convert 'Case B' into 'Case R.'

If he had had his way, the declaration of war would have been postponed until the completion of mobilization. But even before Count Berchtold had yielded to the German pressure, reports began to come in which announced the impending mobilization of the Russian military districts nearest the Galician frontier.* It was therefore reasonable to suppose that the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war would lead Russia to proceed from threats to action, that is, to order mobilization. This would, of course, immediately, raise the question of 'Case R,' and that in turn would compel the abandonment of the campaign against Serbia—for the three corps in Bosnia and Croatia would not be strong enough for a campaign against Serbia. Accordingly, as soon as General Conrad learned of the decision to issue the declaration of war (27 July), he asked Count Berchtold to send to Berlin a note, which he himself sketched, to the following effect:

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* Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 60; Hohenlohe to Conrad, telegram, 27 July; Conrad, IV, 132–133.

> We learn that Russia will mobilize the military districts of Kiev, Odessa and Moscow. We regard this as a threat so dangerous to Austria-Hungary that, in case this mobilization is confirmed, Germany should at once order mobilization against Russia.*

This proposed *démarche* was the logical military consequence of Count Berchtold's decision to follow the advice of Berlin. If Berlin insisted on a declaration of war before the Austro-Hungarian army was ready to begin operations, then Germany must cover the Austrian rear.

Count Berchtold, however, did not give entire satisfaction to the general's demand. Instead of despatching a note to Berlin, he called, late in the evening, on the German ambassador. After informing Herr von Tschirschky of the reports received about Russian military measures, he said:

> The chief of the general staff is of the opinion that the moment has come, in case Berlin possesses confirmation of the Russian military preparations, to inform St. Petersburg, with a view to clearing up the military situation, that this mobilization on the southern and western frontiers of Russia is so threatening that corresponding counter-measures would have to be taken.†

Now Count Berchtold, perhaps because he was aware of the effect which such a declaration was likely to have at St. Petersburg, did not ask the German Government to make that declaration: he contented himself with communicating the opinion of the chief of staff and leaving the German Government to act upon it if it saw fit. But the problem was not solved by such a half-measure, and on the following day General Conrad returned to the charge.‡ The tables were in fact turned. Military action which, from the German point of view, seemed desirable became, from the Austro-Hungarian point of view, possible only if accompanied by strong political action on the part of Germany.

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* Conrad, IV, 133. He also wished to learn whether Germany "is disposed to order general mobilization, in which case we should also be willing to do so. Perhaps Russia only wishes to intimidate us, but if she is in earnest then the *casus foederis* is involved [*dann läge der grosse Kriegsfall vor*]."

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 281.

‡ Conrad was so dissatisfied with Berchtold's conduct that he appealed to Tisza, through Burián, the Hungarian minister *a latere* in Vienna, to exert pressure on Berchtold in favor of resolute action. Burián to Tisza, telegram, 28 July; Tisza, I, 42–43.

True to his promise Count Berchtold issued the declaration of war against Serbia on the morning of 28 July.* But was not this in defiance of the advice sent from Berlin the night before?† No. For, quite apart from the platonic nature of that advice, there was the telegram from Count Szögyény to nullify any effect that it might otherwise have had; and more important still, the advice was not conveyed to Count Berchtold until it was too late. The German chancellor's telegram was received at the embassy in Vienna at 5.30 A. M. But Herr von Tschirschky did not see Count Berchtold until the afternoon; and since he himself both desired war and knew that Count Berchtold was planning to declare it as soon as he could secure the approval of the Emperor, it is a reasonable presumption that he postponed the execution of his instructions until the Austrian foreign minister could say, with perfect accuracy, that "England's move was made too late." The fact that the ambassador reported his conversation with Count Berchtold in a telegram of only two sentences is a significant indication of his own attitude toward the *démarche* prescribed by Berlin.‡

The manner in which Count Berchtold obtained the consent of the Emperor Francis Joseph to the immediate declaration of war also calls for remark. Having decided to declare war, he informed the old monarch that since the Serbian reply, while worthless in substance, was conciliatory in form, "the Powers of the Triple Entente might still make an effort to secure a peaceful solution of the conflict," and submitted a draft declaration worded as follows:

> The Royal Government of Serbia, not having answered in a satisfactory manner the note of 23 July, the Imperial and Royal Government are themselves compelled to see to the safeguard-

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 311.

† That is, Bethmann's telegram at 11.50 P. M.; G 277. See above, pp. 70–71.

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July, 4.55 P. M.; G 313.

> ing of their rights and interests, and with this object to have recourse to arms, *all the more so because Serbian troops have already attacked a detachment of the Imperial and Royal army near Temes-Kubin.* Austria-Hungary consequently considers herself henceforward in a state of war with Serbia.*

The Emperor approved the draft, and it was despatched in an open telegram to Belgrade on the morning of 28 July—but with the omission of the words in italics.† On the following day Count Berchtold rather casually informed his master:

> Since the news of the fighting near Temes-Kubin has not been confirmed, and on the other hand only an isolated communication about a small skirmish near Gradishte is available, which did not seem proper to put forward as the justification of an important act of state, I have, in the hope of obtaining Your Majesty's subsequent most gracious approval, taken it upon myself to eliminate from the declaration of war addressed to Serbia the sentence concerning the attack of Serbian troops near Temes-Kubin.‡

The suspicion was long cherished that the Emperor Francis Joseph had been tricked into signing the declaration of war. In August, 1924, Colonel Seeliger, chief of the press bureau of the Vienna war office, was quoted as saying that Francis Joseph refused to sign the declaration of war until Count Berchtold read out a telegram which stated that "Serbians had raided Bosnian territory, and in the fighting there some 400 soldiers had been killed." Colonel Seeliger added that their only information was that four gendarmes had been wounded in a border fray and that when he informed Count Kinsky, one of the Emperor's aides, of this, the latter replied that Count Berchtold had forged the telegram.§ It should be said, however, that Count Berchtold has denied the charge.||

Thus at last Austria-Hungary had reached her goal, and at

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* Berchtold to Francis Joseph, 27 July; A II 78.

† Berchtold to Serbian foreign office, 28 July; A II 97.

‡ Berchtold to Francis Joseph, 29 July; A III 26.

§ *New York Times*, 20 August, 1924, Associated Press despatch.

|| In conversation with the writer in August, 1928.

least her policy was consistent. War had been determined upon; a dastardly crime provided a plausible excuse; the assistance of Germany was secured. Count Berchtold had no reason to hesitate, and he did not hesitate; there was no hypocrisy about his conduct. But he would probably not have taken the final step at the precise moment when mediation was being offered from several quarters had he not been pressed thereto by Germany. His declaration of war closed the second act of the drama, and, in effect, signalized the end of the epoch which began in 1871.

CHAPTER XIV

RUSSIA'S REPLY

THE news of the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war produced a shock in St. Petersburg. Russian opinion regarded the Serbian reply, which was received late on 27 July and published the next day, as a fair answer to the Austrian demands. "One has to recognize the good intentions of Serbia to comply wholly and completely with the wishes of Austria," said a member of the court.* "It exceeds all our expectations in its moderation," declared M. Sazonov; "we do not see what further demands could be made by Austria, unless the Vienna Cabinet is seeking for a pretext for war with Serbia."† Consequently the foreign minister, although he had received no reply from Vienna to his proposal for direct conversations, continued to be optimistic,‡ for he had hitherto relied upon Germany to use her influence at Vienna in the interest of moderation and peace.§

When, on the afternoon of 28 July, he learned of the Austrian declaration of war, "Sazonov's optimism vanished at one stroke and he was carried away by the idea that a general war was inevitable."|| In a stormy interview with Count Pourtalès he expressed himself in vigorous terms:

> He did not have the least doubt that we [Germany] had had exact knowledge of the Austro-Hungarian plans and that he had to deal with a scheme concocted between us and the Vienna Cabinet.¶

Since the ambassador declined to discuss the Serbian note and

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* Chelius to William II, telegram, 28 July; G 337.

† Sazonov to ambassadors, telegram, 27 July; R 33.

‡ Dobrorolski, p. 22. Pourtalès, after a conversation with Sazonov on 27 July (Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 282), told Szápáry that "the minister persisted in his optimistic mood," the basis for which was not "discoverable" [*erfindlich*] by the two ambassadors. Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; A II 93.

§ Schilling, p. 15.

|| Dobrorolski, p. 23.

¶ Pourtalès, p. 33.

professed ignorance of the attitude of Berlin toward the proposed conference and also referred to "the great danger which might arise at the present critical moment from the fact that far-reaching military preparations were being undertaken,"* the minister concluded that "Germany is, if anything, in favor of the uncompromising attitude adopted by Austria." He therefore telegraphed to London:

> This attitude of the German Government is most alarming. It seems to me that England is in a better position than any other Power to make another attempt at Berlin to induce the German Government to take the necessary action. There is no doubt that the key of the situation is to be found in Berlin.†

In a second message he indicated what he considered "the necessary action":

> The Austrian declaration of war clearly renders useless my direct conversations with the Austro-Hungarian ambassador. Action by the London Cabinet to start mediation with a view to stopping military operations of Austria against Serbia is now most urgent. Unless military operations are stopped, mediation would only allow matters to drag on and allow Austria time to crush Serbia.‡

These telegrams merit certain comments. (1) M. Sazonov, doubtless discouraged by the failure of his previous appeals, did not ask for a promise of British solidarity, although from his point of view, the situation made this more desirable than ever: which suggests that he intended to go ahead regardless of what Great Britain might do. (2) The object of his proposed discussions with Vienna had been to forestall military operations against Serbia. The declaration of war now altered the whole picture and, incidentally, convinced him that Germany would do nothing to restrain her ally. (3) Having taken the position that Russia could not disinterest herself in the fate of Serbia, there was no alternative for him, unless he was to abandon his position, but to take steps which would enable Russia to make her word good.

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 338.
† Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 28 July; R 43.
‡ Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 28 July; R 48.

Hence, without waiting for the British mediation to be set on foot, the Russian minister decided to use the power granted to him at the crown council on 25 July and to order partial mobilization. The foreign press correspondents were informed that since Germany had refused to mediate, "on the first move of Austria against Servia Russia would mobilize."[*] And a clear-cut notice was sent to the German Government:

> In consequence of the declaration of war by Austria against Serbia, the Imperial Government will announce to-morrow (29 July) mobilization in the military conscriptions of Odessa, Kiev, Moscow and Kazan. Please inform the German Government, but repeat that Russia has no aggressive intention against Germany. The Russian ambassador at Vienna has not been recalled from his post.[†]

The announcement was clearly intended as a warning that Russia could not be ignored. It was the official statement of what M. Sazonov had on 25 July affirmed to the British ambassador:

> Russia cannot allow Austria to crush Servia and become predominant Power in Balkans, and, secure of support of France, she will face all the risks of war.[‡]

The decision of the Russian Government to enforce its point of view by recourse to military measures marks the first step in the third act of the drama. But before describing how that intention was translated into action, it is desirable to give some account of the relations of Russia with her ally, France, and her friend, Great Britain, during the preceding days when their diplomatic representations had failed of effect on the Central Powers.

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[*] Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 235.

[†] Sazonov to Sverbeyev, telegram, 28 July; Romberg, p. 25; B 258, enclosure 2. The other Powers were also informed.

[‡] Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 125.

RUSSIA AND THE ENTENTE POWERS, 25–28 JULY

In spite of the assurances given by MM. Poincaré and Viviani during their visit and by M. Paléologue on the following days,* in spite of the fact that in France public opinion and the press without distinction of party strongly condemned the Austro-Hungarian policy,† M. Sazonov was not a little worried by the efforts of the German ambassador in Paris to secure from the French Government an expression of its solidarity with Germany for the localization of the conflict. For although Baron von Schoen's steps were interpreted at the Quai d'Orsay as "intended to intimidate France and secure her intervention in St. Petersburg,"‡ the acting foreign minister, M. Bienvenu-Martin, seemed to show rather too much complacency to the German overtures. The Russian foreign minister had, therefore, felt constrained to warn Paris that "if there is a question of exercising moderating influence in St. Petersburg, we reject it in advance, as we have adopted at the outset a point of view which we cannot change."§

In point of fact, he need not have been alarmed. On 27 July he learned that MM. Bienvenu-Martin and Berthelot had a "correct understanding of the situation" and were "firm and tranquil in their determination to extend to us their fullest support";|| on the 28th he was informed that the Quai d'Orsay "did not for a moment admit the possibility of exercising a moderating influence in St. Petersburg" and that Baron von Schoen had been told that such influence must be brought to bear "not only in St. Petersburg, but above all in Vienna."¶ Clearly, the attitude of the French foreign office offered no ground for complaint.

But what of the head of the French Government, who was still at sea and not due to reach Paris until 29 July? On 27

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* See above, I, 450, 500, 511–512.
† Sevastopulo to Sazonov, telegram, 25 July; R 19.
‡ Sevastopulo to Sazonov, telegram, 26 July; R 29.
§ Sazonov to Izvolski, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 19.
|| Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; Romberg, p. 23.
¶ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 28 July; Romberg, p. 26.

July M. Viviani telegraphed from the *France* instructions direct to the ambassador in St. Petersburg:

> Please say to M. Sazonov that France, appreciating as fully as Russia how highly important it is for the two countries to affirm their complete agreement with regard to the other Powers and to neglect no effort to bring about a solution of the conflict, is ready to give full support to the action of the Imperial Government for the purpose of maintaining the general peace.*

M. Paléologue executed his instructions early the next day. According to his account, he said to M. Sazonov:

> I beseech you not to take any military measure on the German front, and to be very circumspect on the Austrian front, until Germany has shown her hand. The slightest imprudence on your part would cost us the support of England.

The Russian minister, he says, promised to remember this and agreed to accept all proposals from England and France "to save peace."† But M. Paléologue must have said something more. For the journal of the Russian foreign office records that

> On the instructions of his government, the French ambassador acquainted the foreign minister with the complete readiness of France to fulfil her obligations as an ally in case of necessity.‡

This language seems to have been a stretching of the instructions received from the French premier, a fact which confirms the impression that M. Paléologue was more zealous than his government. But it was only what MM. Poincaré and Viviani had said five days before, and while M. Sazonov may have felt a little more assured of French support, there is no evidence that in consequence he adopted a stiffer policy. His course had been determined upon on 24 July.

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* Viviani to Paléologue, telegram, 27 July; Poincaré, IV, 335.

† Paléologue, I, 32–33.

‡ Schilling, p. 43. This is also implied in what Paléologue said to Pourtalès on this same day: "If in a day, or in two days at most, the Austro-Serbian conflict is not settled, there will be war, the general war, a catastrophe such as the world has never known." Paléologue, I, 31.

From the British Government the Russian foreign minister was not able to extract any kind of promise. Sir George Buchanan's refusal, on 24 July, to hold out any hope that Great Britain would proclaim her solidarity with France and Russia* had received the "entire approval" of Sir Edward Grey;† the ambassador's report that "the Emperor had expressed great disappointment"‡ and his own opinion that the British position was "a very delicate one," "a most perilous one," did not stir the foreign office in London to commit itself in any way. Consequently when Sazonov raised the issue again early on 27 July, Buchanan was forced to challenge the whole hypothesis:

> His Excellency [he said] was wrong in believing that we should promote cause of peace by telling Germany if she supported Austria by force of arms she would have us to deal with as well as France and Russia. Such a menace would but stiffen her attitude, and it was only by approaching her as a friend anxious to preserve peace that we could induce her to use her influence at Vienna to avert war.

The ambassador went on to say that if British mediation was to succeed, Russia "must do nothing to precipitate a conflict"; he trusted that "mobilization ukase would be deferred as long as possible, and that when it was issued troops would not be allowed to cross frontier."§ But even then Sazonov would not give up. On 28 July he repeated to Buchanan his opinion that "only way to avert war was for His Majesty's Government to let it be clearly known that they would join France and Russia"||—and was urged once more "to refrain from any military measures which might be construed as a challenge by Germany."¶ Very little comfort indeed was M. Sazonov able to get out of Sir George Buchanan.

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* Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 24 July; B 101.

† Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 25 July; B 112.

‡ Buchanan to Grey, private telegram, 26 July; B 153.

§ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 170.

|| Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 247.

¶ Buchanan, I, 197. Buchanan urged Paléologue "to speak in the same sense" to Sazonov; the French ambassador replied that he "had never used any other language." Paléologue, I, 32. The British ambassador protests against the version of Baron von Schoen (*Erlebtes*, p. 172), according to which he egged Russia on, "while

The reports from London were somewhat more encouraging. Sir Edward Grey informed Count Benckendorff that he had refused the German request "to bring conciliatory pressure to bear at St. Petersburg";* moreover, he had told Prince Lichnowsky that "in his opinion Austrian mobilization must lead to Russian mobilization" and that "grave danger of a general war will thereupon arise," wherefore he was asking Germany to give a promise not to mobilize.† This was certainly in sharp contrast with Buchanan's request that Russia "would not precipitate war by mobilizing"; for, said the ambassador, "if Russia mobilized, Germany would not be content with mere mobilization or give Russia time to carry out hers, but would probably declare war at once."‡ It may be presumed that M. Sazonov would attach more importance to the statement of the British foreign secretary than to what his ambassador in St. Petersburg was saying; certainly he was justified in believing that the British Government would not object to Russian mobilization, as indeed it did not.§

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endeavoring to throw all the blame on Germany." "I said all that I possibly could to discourage mobilization, knowing that it would furnish Germany with the pretext which she wanted for declaring war on Russia." Buchanan, I, 198. But while trying to restrain Sazonov, Buchanan, like Paléologue, endeavored to convince Pourtalès of the seriousness of the situation. "It was time," Buchanan told him, "for the German ambassador in Vienna to speak seriously to Count Berchtold, for if Germany allowed Austria to attack Serbia, a general war would be the inevitable result." The German ambassador "was greatly upset by this remark," but said that he could not "discuss anything that Austria had done." Buchanan, I, 198–199. Cf. Pourtalès' report of 27 July; G 339. The Rumanian minister quoted Pourtalès as saying that "Austria-Hungary is a great Power, you cannot dictate solutions to her." C. Diamandy, "Ma mission en Russie, 1914–1918," I, in *Revue des deux mondes*, 7th period, IXL, 801 (15 February, 1929).

* Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegram, 25 July; R 20.

† Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegram, 25 July; R 22. This telegram was stronger than the preceding one, for whereas in the latter Grey was reported as merely saying that "he had to look forward to the fact that Austrian mobilization would lead to Russian mobilization," in the later message he was represented as taking Russian mobilization for granted. It is not clear, however, that any real importance is to be attached to the distinction. Grey's version of the conversation is recorded in his despatch to Buchanan, 25 July; B 132. See above, pp. 41–42.

‡ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 25 July; B 125.

§ Crowe on 27 July expressed himself thus: "Austria is already mobilizing. This, if the war does come, is a serious menace to Russia who cannot be expected to delay her own mobilization, which, as it is, can only become effective in something like double the time required by Austria or by Germany . . . it seems that Austria is going to war because that was from the beginning her intention. If that view proves correct, it would be neither possible nor just and wise to make any move to restrain Russia from mobilizing." Minute on B 170.

On 27 July Benckendorff reported that Grey had urged upon Lichnowsky that Germany should take action at Vienna and had declared finally that if Germany would not co-operate for the maintenance of peace, "Great Britain reserved to herself full liberty of action."[*] The ambassador, who appreciated thoroughly the difficulties of the foreign secretary's position,[†] was evidently quite satisfied with the development of the situation, for he telegraphed:

> To-day Grey's language is much clearer and noticeably firmer. He counts much on the impression which will be made by the measures taken about the fleet, which were made known to-day. The telegram received yesterday from Buchanan[‡] has apparently made a very useful impression. In any case the confidence of Berlin and Vienna in regard to England's neutrality no longer has any foundation.[§]

What conclusions M. Sazonov may have drawn from Count Benckendorff's telegrams, we do not know; but if he deduced, as he was entitled to do, that Great Britain condemned the conduct of the Central Powers, approved of the attitude of Russia and would not protest if the Russian Government took military measures, and might, if war came, be drawn in herself, he was not wrong. On 28 July Sir Arthur Nicolson stated the position of the foreign office very clearly:

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[*] Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R 42.

[†] Grey, wrote Benckendorff privately to Sazonov on 26 July, "is not sure of his public opinion and fears that if he commits himself too far, he will not be sustained." The ambassador thought that the minister was probably "suffering as much as we are." England was not yet aroused, but even if her co-operation were to come too late, "it will come." "What terrifies England is less the Austrian hegemony in the Balkans than the German hegemony in the world." Marchand, II, 329–330. Probably this letter did not reach St. Petersburg in time to influence Sazonov's decisions.

[‡] Buchanan's private telegram of 26 July (B 153), in which he begged Grey to state to Parliament that "if European peace is being endangered it is not Russia but Austria who is at fault. . . . Austria has so far given no sign that she desires peaceful settlement of question and has addressed direct challenge to Russia."

[§] Benckendorff to Sazonov, 27 July; R, 1925 61. Grey, however, when speaking of the orders to the fleet, emphasized that the ambassador "must not take my reference to it as meaning that we promised anything more than diplomatic action." Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 27 July; B 177. Benckendorff did not report this, but it doubtless guided Buchanan in his conversation with Sazonov on 28 July, when he for the fourth time declined to promise the solidarity of Great Britain.

> I can quite understand Russia not being able to permit Austria to crush Servia. I think the talk about localizing the war merely means that all the Powers are to hold the ring while Austria quietly strangles Servia. This to my mind is quite preposterous, not to say iniquitous. I do not understand after the very satisfactory way in which Servia has met the Austrian requests how Austria can with any justification proceed to hostile measures against her. If she deliberately provokes war with Servia with the intention of giving her what she calls a lesson, she is, I think, acting most wrongly, for she must know very well that such action on her part would in all probability lead to general European conflagration, with all its untold disastrous consequences. . . .
>
> . . . the tone of our press, after the first shock which was occasioned by the Austrian ultimatum, has come round to the fact that it would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to stand outside a general European conflagration. There is no doubt whatsoever that were we drawn into this conflagration we should be on the side of our friends. Although therefore we were unable to give Sazonov a definite undertaking as to what our attitude would be, I think you will see that there is very little doubt, supposing we were called upon to take a share, that we should not hesitate to do our duty.*

But however confident M. Sazonov may have been of ultimate British assistance, his professed attitude on 28 July was not different from what it was on 25 July when he asserted that Russia "will face all the risks of war."

The diplomatic exchanges with the French and British Governments had cleared up one question: while both Buchanan and Paléologue had warned against military measures on the German frontier, the latter had objected only very lightly and the former not at all to steps taken against Austria-Hungary. More than that, Germany herself had taken the same position. Under pressure from the French ambassador in Berlin, Herr von Jagow had said: "We shall mobilize if Russia mobilizes on our frontier or if Russian troops enter upon Austrian territory."* With this assurance, M. Sazonov could order a partial mobilization of the Russian army in the expectation that Germany would not raise objections. We may now turn to examine the problems involved in such a measure and the circumstances in which it was actually carried out.

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* Nicolson to Buchanan, private letter, 28 July, arrived in St. Petersburg, 1 August; B 239. Nicolson had been annoyed for a moment by Sazonov's constant change of plan, first suggesting that Serbia appeal to the Powers, then proposing Anglo-Italian mediation, and lastly trying to converse directly with Austria. "One really does not know where one is with M. Sazonov and I told Count Benckendorff so this afternoon." Minute on B 179, 27 July. But this mood soon passed and had no effect on the general view of the situation.

THE PRELIMINARIES OF MOBILIZATION

The decision of 25 July which authorized the Russian foreign minister to order, at the moment he deemed necessary, the mobilization of the four southern military districts of the empire was taken as a diplomatic measure: its object was to indicate Russia's earnestness of purpose and to compel Austria-Hungary, under pressure of a 'military demonstration,' to consent to negotiate a pacific settlement of her quarrel with Serbia. It was not opposed by the minister of war, General Sukhomlinov, a man of weak character, or the chief of the general staff, General Yanushkevich, a courtier soldier and a newcomer to his post. But it at once aroused the opposition of the chief of the mobilization section of the staff, General Dobrorolski, and the quartermaster-general, General Danilov. In the first place, the mobilization plans (revised plan no. 18) provided only for a general mobilization (except in certain Asiatic provinces), because it had been assumed that Austria-Hungary and Germany would stand together in any war with Russia. There were also the objections that the Russian army was not organized on a territorial basis (because of the varying density of the population) and that a partial mobilization would necessitate certain railway arrangements which would seriously impede a general mobilization if such a step became necessary. Thirdly, the proposal to mobilize the four districts of Moscow, Kazan, Kiev, and Odessa involved serious strategic difficulties. These districts would yield only 13 corps, whereas the plans of the general staff called for 16 corps in a war with Austria—and while M. Sazonov and the Tsar hoped that the military threat would induce Austria to negotiate, the staff believed war to be certain and wished to be prepared for it. Moreover, the failure to mobilize the Warsaw district, out of regard for German susceptibility, not only deprived the southern army of the three additional corps required, but left the Polish frontier open to an Austrian invasion. Finally, there was the political objection that, as Dobrorolski expresses it,

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* Bronevski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 27 July; R, 1925 49, 60. To Goschen, Jagow said that "if Russia only mobilized in south, Germany would not mobilize, but if she mobilized in north Germany would have to do so too." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 185. Goschen's telegram was repeated to St. Petersburg, Buchanan being instructed to tell Sazonov that this information was "very confidential." Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 28 July; B 219. Jagow, however, had authorized the French ambassador to communicate the information formally to his government, so that he must have expected that it would be passed on to St. Petersburg. J. Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 67.

> A threat which was not supported by overwhelming proof of its own strength was bound to create the temptation to disregard it, so that a partial mobilization would have led to exactly the opposite consequences of those which were counted upon.

For all these reasons partial mobilization, although a scheme for carrying it through was hastily drawn up at the order of General Yanushkevich, was strongly opposed by the members of the general staff, and they finally succeeded in persuading the chief of the staff that the thing was impracticable.* The scheme, in fact, was analogous to Count Berchtold's plan of a surprise attack with troops on a peace-footing, both being diplomatic devices invented by foreign ministers without understanding of or regard for military realities.

Convinced by the afternoon of 28 July that "a general war was unavoidable," M. Sazonov represented to General Yanushkevich "the necessity of no longer hesitating about the mobilization of our army."* This marked a step forward by the Russian foreign minister, for he had told the British ambassador that the order for mobilization would be issued on the day when the Austro-Hungarian troops entered Serbia; but he may have considered the declaration of war tantamount to an actual invasion, which was a reasonable assumption. The chief of staff now argued against partial mobilization (to which he had not objected on 25 July):

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* Dobrorolski, *Die Mobilmachung der russichen Armee 1914*, pp. 10–19; Y. Danilov, *Russland im Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1925, pp. 16–22); M. T. Florinsky, "The Russian Mobilization of 1914," in *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII, 205–207 (June, 1927); A. von Wegerer, "The Russian Mobilization of 1914," in *Political Science Quarterly*, XLIII, 206–207 (June, 1928).

> If subsequently fresh complications arose in our relations with Germany, Russia would be placed in a very unpleasant—indeed, perilous—position, because the plans for a general mobilization prepared in the ministry of war could not be put into operation.

He therefore requested of the minister "a categorical assurance that war with Germany would be avoided." To this demand M. Sazonov replied that

> to his regret, he was unable to give an undertaking of that kind, the more so because his own hopes of active assistance from Berlin in settling the conflict were steadily growing weaker.†

Nevertheless, because of Herr von Jagow's promise not to object to a mobilization against Austria-Hungary alone, M. Sazonov—so at any rate he assured Sir George Buchanan—stood out against the pressure of General Yanushkevich.‡ Accordingly a compromise seems to have been reached. At a conference between Generals Yanushkevich, Dobrorolski (the chief of the mobilization section), Ronshin (chief of the military communications section) and Danilov (the quartermaster-general), it was decided that two ukases, one for general, the other for partial mobilization, should be prepared for the Tsar's signature, but the question as to which of them should be published was left open.*

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* Dobrorolski, p. 23. "Telegram of the Rumanian minister in St. Petersburg reports that majority of the council of ministers has expressed itself for war. A decision, however, has not yet been made." Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July, 4.30 P. M.; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,955. Diamandy's telegram probably refers to the situation on the evening of 28 July, or at the latest, on the morning of 29 July.

† Schilling, p. 16.

‡ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 276.

It would appear, however, that General Yanushkevich did not wait for a formal decision. Either because he was confident of the result or with the object of forcing the situation, he telegraphed at 7.20 the next morning, 29 July, to General Zhilinski, the commander at Warsaw:

> 17 [30] July will be announced as the first day of our general mobilization. The announcement will follow according to the telegram agreed upon.†

Even before this General Danilov had inquired of the commander at Warsaw about the arrangements for detraining cavalry divisions; and while he ordered that they were not to be pushed forward toward the German frontier and stated that hostilities were not to be opened until the receipt of a special telegram,‡ obviously the Russian general staff anticipated that general mobilization would be ordered on 29 July.

Before proceeding to the Tsar on 29 July, General Yanushkevich, whose arguments had made "a great impression" on M. Sazonov, saw the minister, and "again insisted on the indispensability of the measures proposed by him."§ If, as M. Sazonov alleges, the Russian general staff had received information of mobilization in Galicia,* which would point to a general Austrian mobilization,† the general may have convinced the foreign minister of the necessity of Russian general mobilization and have made use of Sazonov's approval in his discussion with the Tsar.

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* Danilov, p. 17; Dobrorolski, pp. 23–24. Recouly, p. 158, on the authority of statements made to him by Danilov, says that "the question was examined and discussed at length in a conference held on Wednesday, 28 July, at 5 P. M. in the office of General Yanushkevich, in the presence of Sukhomlinov, the minister of war, and of M. Sazonov and his assistant M. Neratov." "Wednesday, 28 July" cannot be correct, for 28 July was a Tuesday. Such a conference as Recouly describes was held on Wednesday, 29 July (see below, p. 107). Neither Danilov nor Dobrorolski mentions this conference on 28 July. Sukhomlinov, pp. 361–362, says that he went to Peterhof on that day, mentions no conference, and states that on his return he was informed by Sazonov that the Tsar had ordered the mobilization of the four southern districts. It is necessary to remember that all the accounts of the Russian mobilization by the persons concerned in it were written abroad after the close of the war; the authors had, apparently, to depend on their memory, and it is not surprising that there are many inconsistencies and contradictions in the various narratives, at least on points of detail.

† Hoeniger, *Russlands Vorbereitungen zum Weltkrieg*, p. 100. For Austrian reports of extensive military activity in the Warsaw district, see Andrian to Berchtold, telegrams, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,010, 11,011.

‡ Telegrams of Danilov, 11.58 P. M., 28 July, 1.10 A. M., 29 July; Hoeniger, p. 105.

§ Schilling, p. 16.

Little is known about the interview of General Yanushkevich with his sovereign. Late the night before Nicholas II had sent a telegram to William II:

> Am glad you are back. In this most serious moment I appeal to you to help me. An ignoble war has been declared to a weak country. The indignation in Russia shared fully by me is enormous. I foresee that very soon I shall be overwhelmed by pressure brought upon me and be forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war. To try to avoid such a calamity as a European war, I beg you in the name of our old friendship to do what you can to stop your allies from going too far.‡

In the morning he received a telegram from the German Emperor which had crossed with his own. William expressed the "gravest concern" over "the impression which the action of Austria against Servia is creating in your country." He denounced the Serbs, and urged that "we both, you and me, have a common interest, as well as all sovereigns, to insist that all persons morally responsible for the dastardly murder should receive their deserved punishment." But the message ended in a friendly tone:

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* Sazonov, p. 193. In the course of 29 July (the exact hour is not known) the news was received from the frontier authorities that the I corps in Cracow had been fully mobilized; there was also an unconfirmed report that the XI corps in Lemberg had been ordered to mobilize. *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, 88. As a matter of fact, 'Case B' involved the mobilization of certain units in Galicia and their transport to the Serbian front; Conrad, IV, 300–301, and map (*Anlage*) 10. These activities would have been apparent from 26 July, and, unless the Russians were accurately informed about the details of 'Case B,' would be interpreted as directed against Russia. The British and French military attachés in Vienna had already reported the despatch of cavalry divisions to Galicia. Bunsen to Grey, telegrams, 27 and 28 July; B 200, 251. Bourgeois and Pagès, p. 41. Very likely they gave this information to the Russian attaché, if he himself did not have it. On 26 July, the three Galician corps had been ordered to prepare mines and to make preparations against surprise. Conrad, IV, 273.

† The Russian *Orange Book* of 1914 contains a telegram (no. 47 of 28 July) from Schebeko stating that "the order for general mobilization has been signed." The news was wholly incorrect, for that order was not signed until 31 July. 28 July was the date on which the partial mobilization ordered on 25 July was to begin. Whether the telegram was antedated three days, made to order for the *Orange Book*, or mutilated, is not known. If Sazonov actually received the telegram as printed, it is surprising that he did not cite it to the ambassadors in St. Petersburg as a compelling reason for Russian mobilization. The British ambassador in Vienna sent no such telegram, nor, so far as is known, did his French colleague.

‡ Nicholas II to William II, 29 July, 12.29 A. M.; G 332. The telegram was written by the Tsar in his own hand. Schilling, p. 46, note. The two monarchs corresponded in English, and their language has been left just as they wrote it. In the German *White Book* of 1914, the telegram is dated 1 P. M. (no. 21), to make it appear as an answer to William's telegram mentioned in the next sentence in the text.

> On the other hand, I fully understand how difficult it is for you and your Government to face the drift of your public opinion. Therefore, with regard to the hearty and tender friendship which binds us both from long ago with firm ties, I am exerting my utmost influence to induce the Austrians to deal straightly to arrive to a satisfactory understanding with you. I confidently hope you will help me in my efforts to smoothe over difficulties that may still arise.
>
> Your very sincere and devoted friend and cousin
>
> WILLY.*

With what real motives or expectations the two monarchs thus turned almost simultaneously to each other must remain a matter of speculation. But it is not surprising that, given the Tsar's fear of military pressure and the German Emperor's statement that he was working on Vienna, General Yanushkevich had difficulty in making his views prevail. "The Tsar, influenced by the arguments adduced, consented, although not at all willingly, to sign the order for a general mobilization."† Whether he also signed the order for partial mobilization is not known, although the later events of the day make this seem probable.‡

Having secured the Tsar's signature, General Yanushkevich returned to his office and handed the ukase over to the chief of the mobilization section, General Dobrorolski, for execution; according to the latter's recollection, this occurred about noon.* He himself informed M. Sazonov that he had been instructed by the Tsar to tell the German ambassador that "the declaration of mobilization by Russia was no hostile act against Germany" and "to give the assurance that Russia intended to maintain friendly relations with Germany." But as M. Sazonov "had a very poor opinion" of Count Pourtalès, he advised the chief of staff to speak with the German military attaché, "who was more at home in these matters." So General Yanushkevich sent for Major von Eggeling, who presented himself an hour late, in civil clothing, and persisted in speaking French, although he usually talked Russian.† The general said that "everything was just as the minister [of war] had told me it was two days ago."

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* William II to Nicholas II, 28 July, 10.45 P. M.; despatched 29 July, 1.45 A. M.; G 335. Drafted by Stumm, head of the political department of the foreign office, but considerably amended by the Emperor. On the genesis of the telegram, see below, p. 128.

† Schilling, p. 16.

‡ During the afternoon Sazonov told Buchanan that "order for partial mobilization was signed to-day." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 276.

> He gave me his word of honor [so Eggeling reported] in the most solemn manner, and offered to confirm it in writing, that up to the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon no mobilization had commenced anywhere, that is, the calling up of a single man or horse. He could give no guarantees for the future, but could assure me most emphatically that His Majesty, now as before, did not desire mobilization on the fronts near our frontiers.

The attaché, referring to reports of movements of troops, said that he was "puzzled": the general replied that the movements "did not originate with him and were entirely measures of precaution." Major von Eggeling's conclusion was, "I am forced to consider his talk an attempt to mislead me."‡ And so it was, although technically the statement was true, even, apparently, the fact that the Tsar did not "desire" mobilization against Germany. "I considered that I had a perfect right to put such a statement into writing," Yanushkevich explained at the trial of General Sukhomlinov in 1917, "because as a matter of fact mobilization had not at this moment been proclaimed; I still had in my pocket the ukase about mobilization"!*

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* Dobrorolski, "Noch einiges von der russischen Mobilmachung im Jahre 1914," in *KSF*, II, 85 (April, 1924).

† Oman, *The Outbreak of the War of 1914–1918*, p. 67, quoting Yanushkevich's testimony at the trial of Sukhomlinov in 1917.

‡ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 370. Cf. B. von Eggeling, *Die russische Mobilmachung und der Kriegsausbruch* (Oldenburg, 1919), pp. 29–32. Yanushkevich appears to have circulated a somewhat different version of the conversation. "I hear from my French colleague that Chief of General Staff sent this afternoon for German military attaché and assured him on his word of honour that, up to the present, no single military preparation had been taken against Germany." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 271.

If the last statement is correct, then it must have been somewhat later than noon when Yanushkevich gave Dobrorolski the ukase; but the exact hour is immaterial. Before the actual order for the mobilization could be sent out, the ukase had to be countersigned by the Senate and by the ministers of war, the navy, and the interior. General Dobrorolski spent the afternoon collecting these signatures. He has given a vivid picture of his experiences. General Sukhomlinov felt that Russia would be drawn into a conflict beyond her strength (though he had often boasted of the preparedness of the army), but signed. M. Maklakov, the minister of the interior, sitting opposite a table decorated with ikons and holy lamps, began to talk of the danger of revolution,† which was only waiting for war to raise its head. "But," he said, "we cannot escape our destiny," and, crossing himself, he signed the telegram. Admiral Grigorovich, however, was away from his office and was not expected back until seven o'clock. About 5 P. M. Dobrorolski returned to staff headquarters‡ with only two of the necessary three signatures.

THE POLITICAL SITUATION, 29 JULY

While preparations were thus being made for putting the military machine in motion, M. Sazonov was seeing the various ambassadors. First of all, at 11 A. M., came Count Pourtalès, to present what he called an "agreeable communication."[*] Arguing that Russia ought to be satisfied with Austria's declaration of disinterestedness,[†] he stated that Germany was "continually endeavoring to persuade Vienna to have a frank discussion with St. Petersburg" and therefore "the declaration of war which had since followed need make no difference." (!)[‡] To this the Russian minister was able to reply that "up to the present there was no evidence to hand that Vienna intended to enter upon the course of a direct exchange of views"; and since Austria-Hungary had mobilized eight corps, "Russia found herself compelled to mobilize the military districts on the Austrian frontier." But, he said,

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* Quoted in Oman, p. 67.

† The day before Sazonov told Buchanan that "he had to-day received a telegram from Minister of the Interior, who was making a tour in the provinces, telling him that he need have no fear concerning internal disturbances, and that in event of war whole nation would be behind Government." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 247.

‡ Dobrorolski, pp. 24–25, and his article in *KSF*, II, 86 (April, 1924).

> in Russia, mobilization was far from meaning war, as it did with the nations of western Europe; the Russian army could stand under arms even for weeks without crossing the frontier.

When Pourtalès protested that the German and Austro-Hungarian staffs "would not be willing to give up the advantage of getting a start over Russia in the matter of mobilization," Sazonov reiterated that "nothing at all would happen to us."[§] Here, indeed, was the pith of the controversy between Russia and Germany: the former claimed the right to use her armed forces in a dispute with Austria-Hungary, the latter contended that from a military point of view this could not be tolerated.

M. Sazonov and his assistants were very sceptical whether the German Government "really intended to exert serious pressure in Vienna" or "would succeed in effecting much there."[||] So when he learned a little later that Vienna had returned "a categorical refusal" to his request for conversations, the Russian minister sent for the German ambassador and told him that "there was nothing left but to return to the proposal of

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[*] Schilling, p. 47.
[†] Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 28 July; G 300.
[‡] Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 28 July; G 315.
[§] Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 343.
[||] Schilling, pp. 47–48.

Sir E. Grey for conversations *à quatre*." Count Pourtalès had nothing to say but that "mobilization, if it were impending, was a great mistake," and M. Sazonov could only repeat that "mobilization was far from meaning war."* The deadlock was complete.

Between the two visits of Count Pourtalès, M. Sazonov told Sir George Buchanan that while partial mobilization would be ordered, he desired to return to Grey's proposal of a conference, now that Austria had rejected direct conversation.

> He did not care [he said] what form such conversations took and he was ready to accept almost any arrangement that was approved by France and England. There was no time to lose, and war could only be averted if you [Grey] could succeed by conversations with ambassadors either collectively or individually in arriving at some formula which you could get Austria to accept. Russian Government had done all they could do to maintain peace and had been perfectly frank and conciliatory throughout, and he trusted British public realized it would not be their fault if their efforts to maintain peace failed.†

Thus on the afternoon of 29 July M. Sazonov had committed himself to a solution to be brought about by British mediation. But as the day advanced, new factors were projected into the situation which were to nullify the effects of this move.

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 365. Sazonov's telegram of 29 July to Bronevski (R, 1925 84; B 299, enclosure 2; R 49 is incomplete) appears to combine the two conversations in one. At least, he represents himself as proposing the conference in reply to Pourtalès' protests against Russian military measures. On the other hand, he followed up this telegram by another (R 50), according to which he had not, at the time he saw Pourtalès, learned of the Austrian refusal to agree to an exchange of views. Pourtalès has it that Sazonov reverted to the conference because of this refusal.

† Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 276. Sazonov telegraphed to Benckendorff: "From now on, nothing remains for us to do but to rely entirely on the British Government to take the initiative in any steps which they may consider advisable." Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 29 July; B 299, enclosure 3. Buchanan asked Sazonov if he would raise objections to San Giuliano's suggestion (see above, p. 63) that Serbia might be invited to accept the Austrian note in its entirety on the advice of the four Powers not directly interested. Sazonov replied that "he could not be more Servian than Servia, and would agree to anything four Powers could arrange provided it was acceptable to Servia"; but he thought that the sharpness of the ultimatum "would have to be toned down by some supplementary statement or explanations." After the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war, this suggestion would seem to have lost any practical value.

Count Pourtalès at once informed his Austro-Hungarian colleague of M. Sazonov's resentment over the refusal of Vienna to exchange views; so Count Szápáry proceeded to see the Russian minister, "in order to clear up certain misunderstandings and to secure a closer insight into the Russian plans." The ambassador stated, in accordance with his instructions,* that Austria-Hungary did not wish to injure Russian interests in the Balkans, would not take any Serbian territory, and would not touch Serbia's sovereignty. Was not this sufficient? Sazonov replied in the negative:

> On the territorial question he had allowed himself to be convinced, but with regard to that of sovereignty, he must hold to his view that the enforcing of the Austrian conditions meant vassalage for Serbia. This, however, would upset the equilibrium in the Balkans, and that was Russia's interest in the question. . . . Russia recognized Austria's legitimate interests and was willing to give it full satisfaction, but this must be clothed in a form acceptable to Serbia.

Whereupon Szápáry declined to recognize the Russian interest. At last, *the* issue between Austria-Hungary and Russia was clearly stated: the one proposed, in effect, to reduce Serbia to its control, the other asserted that such a consummation would be intolerable. Here too the deadlock was complete. The minister accordingly informed the ambassador that a ukase would be signed that day ordering mobilization "on a somewhat extensive scale"; but, he added, these troops were not intended to "fall on us," "they would stand to arms only in case Russian interests in the Balkans were threatened."†

At this stage of the conversation M. Sazonov was informed by telephone that the Austro-Hungarian forces had bombarded Belgrade. "He was as if transformed," and overwhelmed Count Szápáry with reproaches. "Why should we go on talking if you act in this fashion!" And the ambassador left him "in a state of great excitement."*

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* Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 28 July; A II 95.

† Sazonov promised that a '*note explicative*' of this "measure of precaution" would be issued, but this was never done.

M. Sazonov was still in this mood when between six and seven o'clock† Count Pourtalès appeared, for the third time that day. He had to read a telegram from Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg:

> Kindly call M. Sazonov's serious attention to the fact that further continuation of Russia's measures of mobilization would force us to mobilize, and that a European war could then scarcely be prevented.‡

But, the ambassador added, "this is not a threat, only a friendly opinion";§ to which M. Sazonov rejoined, "Now I no longer have any doubts about *the* real causes of Austria's intransigeance."|| In any case, Germany had apparently abandoned the position taken two days before, that is, that she would not mobilize so long as Russian measures were confined to the Austrian frontier.

Thus the Russian foreign minister had seen his whole policy

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* Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 19. Szápáry interpreted Sazonov's announcement of mobilization as follows: "The minister dislikes the idea of war as much as his imperial master, and so far from immediately accepting the consequences of our Serbian expedition, is anxious to be able to rob us of the fruits of it without war; at the same time, to be better prepared than at present to enter upon war if it does come. . . . But if Austria-Hungary and Germany wish to anticipate the consequences of the Russian mobilization and not to let Russia get a start in a military way, then Russia appears as the attacked party and will have a better chance of carrying France and perhaps even England with her, and our favorable moral and military situation in Europe will be prejudiced. Thus Russia avoids the difficulty presented by the justice of our action against Serbia and would still be in a position to protect her Balkan interests, perhaps even without going to war." Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July, 1 A. M.; A III 46.

† Schilling, p. 48, gives 3 P. M. as the hour of the visit, but this is clearly a mistake. The telegram which Pourtalès read to Sazonov was sent from Berlin at 1.50 P. M., Russian time, and reached St. Petersburg at 4.35 P. M. Cf. Pourtalès, p. 45. Schilling probably confuses this call with another visit which Pourtalès did make, at Sazonov's request, earlier in the afternoon, but which Schilling does not record.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 29 July; G 342.

§ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 378. The German reads "*freundschaftliche Meinung*," which is doubtless the rendering of the French "*avis amical*." Since the same phrase was used to describe the famous communication of 22 March, 1909 (*G. P.*, XXVI, 693–695), that ended the Bosnian crisis, but which the Russians always regarded as an ultimatum, his language may have sounded more ominous than he intended.

|| Schilling, p. 48.

rejected by the Central Powers. Austria-Hungary refused to negotiate, Germany refused to allow pressure on her ally: no kind of mediation was in sight: the war against Serbia had actually begun.

THE DECISION FOR GENERAL MOBILIZATION

Shortly after the German ambassador's departure, while M. Sazonov was still discussing the situation with his assistants, the telephone rang, and the Tsar personally informed his minister that he had received a telegram from the German Emperor urgently requesting him not to allow events to develop into a war.* Upon Sazonov's pointing out "how little the words of the Kaiser agreed with the instructions conveyed to his ambassador,"† the Tsar promised to telegraph at once to Berlin for an explanation, and gave his foreign minister permission to discuss the question of mobilization at once with the minister of war and the chief of staff.‡

But what was there to discuss? Had not the Tsar that morning signed the ukase for general mobilization? Had not General Dobrorolski been busy during the afternoon collecting the signatures necessary for its execution? One possible explanation of the enigma is that the Tsar had consented to partial, and not general, mobilization; and M. Sazonov, as we have seen, did actually inform Sir George Buchanan that only partial mobilization was to be ordered. But both Baron Schilling and General Dobrorolski, writing independently, state positively that it was the general mobilization which the Tsar sanctioned on the morning of 29 July. The more probable explanation is that Nicholas II, unable as usual to make a decision, had signed the ukases for both partial and general mobilization, but left the choice still open, to be determined by the development of the situation. Then General Yanushkevich, either thinking that the Tsar had given his consent to general mobilization or seeking to have all the technical formalities accomplished by the time a decision was reached, or, it may be, scheming to present his master with a *fait accompli,* had sent General Dobrorolski to get the ministerial signatures. Certainly if Baron Schilling's narrative is to be trusted—and it is our only contemporary source—the officials of the foreign office did not understand that a definite decision had been reached about the mobilization.

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* So Schilling, p. 49. The description of the telegram applies properly to the telegram received at 9.40 P. M. (see below, p. 110), rather than to that received in the morning, but since the reply which the Tsar promised to send was despatched at 8.20, it must have been the first telegram to which Nicholas referred. The presumption is that he was characteristically slow in communicating with the foreign office.

† Presumably the contradiction was found between William's statement that he was exerting his utmost influence to induce the Cabinet of Vienna to negotiate with St. Petersburg and the ambassador's warning against mobilization. Actually, there was no contradiction, for the German Government had on 26 July taken the position that it could not mediate between Russia and Austria-Hungary if Russia began to mobilize (Bethmann to Pourtalès, telegram, 26 July; G 219). It had, however, modified that attitude on the following day when Jagow agreed not to oppose Russian mobilization if directed only against Austria. The real point of Pourtalès' statement was that his government reverted to the position of 26 July.

‡ At some time during the day the Tsar telegraphed to King Carol of Rumania, expressing the hope that he would "intervene in favor of peace." Diamandy, *loc. cit.*, IXL, 817.

Be that as it may, a conference was at once held in General Yanushkevich's office;* officials of the foreign office and the general staff were waiting in the next room, "with some trepidation," to carry out the decisions reached. "After examining the situation from all points of view" the decision was come to that

> in view of the small probability of avoiding war with Germany it was indispensable to prepare for it in every way in good time, and therefore the risk could not be accepted of delaying a general mobilization later by effecting a partial mobilization now.

The Tsar was informed by telephone and he "authorized the taking of steps accordingly."† If this account is correct, M. Sazonov was justified in stating to the British, German, and

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* Sukhomlinov, "Ergänzungen und Betrachtungen zu meinen 'Erinnerungen' und den 'Tagesaufzeichnungen des russischen Aussenministeriums,'" in *KSF*, II, 228 (July, 1924), denies that he was present, and does not refer to any conference in his *Erinnerungen.* Danilov, p. 26, who was present in the next room and whose account otherwise agrees with Schilling, gives 30 July as the date of the conference; but as the question at issue was settled, so far as the general staff and the foreign office were concerned, on 29 July, he has simply remembered inexactly.

† Schilling, p. 50.

Austro-Hungarian ambassadors that only partial mobilization had been ordered, for the decision in favor of general mobilization had not yet been taken.

The decision was received "with enthusiasm by the small circle of those acquainted with what was in progress." M. Sazonov at once telegraphed to his ambassadors:

> The German ambassador informed me to-day of the decision of his government to mobilize, if Russia did not stop her military preparations. Now, in point of fact we only began these preparations in consequence of the mobilization of eight corps already undertaken by Austria and because Austria was obviously unwilling to accept any method of reaching a peaceful settlement of her dispute with Serbia.
>
> As we cannot comply with the wishes of Germany, we have no alternative but to hasten on our own military preparations and to assume that war is inevitable.

The French Government was thanked for the declaration made by M. Paléologue, which "in the existing circumstances . . . is especially valuable to us," that "we could count fully on the assistance of our ally." And a new appeal was addressed to England:

> It would be very desirable if England also, without loss of time, were to associate herself with France and Russia, as it is only in this way that she can succeed in preventing a dangerous alteration in the European balance.*

It was no longer a question of preserving peace through the solidarity of the Triple Entente: so far as M. Sazonov was concerned, he had decided to accept war with Germany rather than tolerate an Austro-Hungarian attack on Serbia. And apparently it was the communication made by Count Pourtalès which caused him to make this decision, rather than await the possible result of the British mediation for which he had during the afternoon once more appealed.

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* Sazonov to Izvolski and Benckendorff, telegram, 29 July; Romberg, p. 30. Benckendorff did not communicate to the British foreign office the parts dealing with France and England; B 300.

When the Tsar had agreed to the general mobilization, General Yanushkevich instructed General Dobrorolski to secure the signature of Admiral Grigorovich to the ukase at once and then to proceed, "without any further word," to send out the orders. Dobrorolski found the admiral about eight o'clock, and got his signature. An hour later he was at the central telegraph office, where he made arrangements for the stopping of all other messages while the military telegram was being sent out, and at "about 9.30" he was on the point of ordering the telegram put on the wires. Then he was called to the telephone. He was told by Yanushkevich not to send out the order, but to await the arrival of Captain Tugan-Baranovski of the general staff. This officer soon appeared, with the message that the Tsar had countermanded the order for general mobilization and substituted for it partial mobilization. So positive an order was not to be disobeyed, and about midnight, albeit with a heavy heart, Dobrorolski sent the order for the mobilization of the districts of Moscow, Kazan, Kiev, and Odessa.*

The Order for Partial Mobilization

What caused the Tsar to change his mind? Doubtless he was influenced in part by the opinion of his entourage who, although after the publication of the Serbian reply considered "a general war almost inevitable," "did not wish it and still desired to avoid it."† But even more he was probably responding to his own inner feelings. For when he came to telegraph the German Emperor about the contradiction between the latter's words and the language of the German Government, as he had promised M. Sazonov to do, he sent this message:

> Thanks for your telegram conciliatory and friendly. Whereas official message presented to-day by your ambassador was conveyed in a very different tone. Beg you to explain this divergency. It would be right to give over the Austro-Serbian

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* Dobrorolski, pp. 24–26. It would appear that for this order he secured the signature of only General Sukhomlinov. Frantz, p. 67, note 2.

† Chelius to William II, telegram, 29 July; G 344.

> problem to the Hague Conference. Trust in your wisdom and friendship.*

Evidently he was not altogether comfortable about the course which, with his sanction, the Russian Government was taking.

In this mood, he received at 9.40 P. M. another telegram from the German Emperor, in reply to his own of the night before. After defending the Austro-Hungarian attitude and reaffirming that his ally did not wish to make any territorial conquests at the expense of Serbia, William continued:

> I therefore suggest that it would be quite possible for Russia to remain a spectator of the Austro-Serbian conflict without involving Europe in the most horrible war she ever witnessed. I think a direct understanding between your Government and Vienna possible and desirable and as I have already telegraphed to you, my Government is continuing its exertions to promote it. Of course military measures on the part of Russia would precipitate a calamity we both wish to avoid and jeopardize my position as mediator which I readily accepted on your appeal to my friendship and my help.†

This appeal disclosed rather naïvely the programme which William II and his chancellor had framed when they gave their original promise of support to Austria-Hungary. But Nicholas II, ever weak and uncertain, was prone to listen to the last person who addressed him. He therefore promptly countermanded the order for general mobilization, just in time.

But was not partial mobilization equally dangerous? As this had been authorized by the council of ministers, the Tsar was obviously in a quandary. Apparently he did not turn to M. Sazonov, who had been empowered to order partial mobilization and could therefore revoke it. Instead he telephoned to General Sukhomlinov to ask whether it would not be possible to stop the partial mobilization. The war minister, thinking that his master was trying to throw the responsibility for a decision on the shoulders of others, replied that "mobilization is not a mechanism which can be stopped and started again at pleasure like a wagon." He pointed out the technical difficulties, and then said, "If Your Majesty does not believe me, ask the chief of the general staff." This the Tsar seems to have done, and he received the same answer.* So he agreed to the partial mobilization, and the order was, as we have seen, despatched at midnight.

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* Nicholas II to William II, telegram, 29 July; 8.20 P. M.; G 366. This telegram was omitted by the German Government from its *White Book* in 1914. It was published by the Russian Government in January, 1915. The delay was due to the fact that the Tsar forgot to send Sazonov a copy of the telegram and it was only later discovered. Sazonov, p. 195. "One cannot help," says Sazonov, "admiring the Tsar's simple words, so full of a profound love of peace and of noble confidence." He evidently forgets that two days before the Tsar had asked him to make this same proposal to the Powers, and that he had done nothing about it. Also that on 29 July he said to Pourtalès that in proposing a return to Grey's conference of four, "the idea of expecting Austria to submit to a sort of European court of arbitration was far from his mind." Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 365.

† William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 29 July; G 359. As it was sent *en clair*, it would be available at once. Dobrorolski says that he was called to the telephone "about 9.30."

But in view of the communication made by Count Pourtalès warning against any mobilization, what the Tsar had sanctioned was likely to be viewed with disapproval in Berlin. So at 1.20 A. M. (30 July) Nicholas sent another telegram to his "cousin and friend":

> Thank you heartily for your quick answer. Am sending Tatishchev this evening with instructions. The military measures which have now come into force were decided five days ago for reasons of defense on account of Austria's preparations. I hope from all my heart that these measures won't in any way interfere with your part as mediator which I greatly value. We need your strong pressure on Austria to come to an understanding with us.†

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* Sukhomlinov, pp. 364–365. At the trial of Sukhomlinov in 1917, he said that Yanushkevich had told him, over the telephone, that the Tsar had said, "Nevertheless, suspend it!" Yanushkevich asked what he was to do, and Sukhomlinov replied, "Do nothing." Sukhomlinov claimed to have himself given the order that the mobilization should not be suspended. Hence it was generally believed, until the publication of General Dobrorolski's account, that the two generals had disobeyed the Tsar. Dobrorolski, p. 27, states emphatically that there was no disobedience, because in 1914 no one would have dreamed of such a thing. In his book Sukhomlinov discards the story altogether. He is supposed to have invented it at his trial, when he was accused of treason, to prove his patriotism and loyalty.

† Nicholas II to William II, telegram, 30 July; G 390. In the German *White Book* of 1914 the hour of despatch was given as 1.20 P. M., in order to represent it as a reply to a telegram from William II, which was stated to have been sent at 1 A. M., though actually not sent till 3.30 P. M., on 30 July (D 420; *White Book*, no. 23). The correct order of the telegrams was thus reversed!

It shows that the Tsar was anxious to avoid war, but in view of the position assumed in Berlin, it was hardly calculated to satisfy the German Government—or at any rate the general staff, and the statement that the measures taken "were decided [upon] five days ago," *i. e.,* in principle, was to have an effect just the opposite of that intended.

To complete the record of this momentous day, the last moves of M. Sazonov have to be considered. At 11 P. M. he sent one of his assistants, N. A. Basily, to the French ambassador to inform him that in consequence of the communication received from Berlin the Russian Government had decided (1) "to order, that very night, the mobilization of the thirteen army corps intended to operate against Austria; (2) to commence secretly the general mobilization." "These last words," says M. Paléologue, "made me jump," and he asked if a partial mobilization would not suffice, "at least provisionally." The Russian official replied with a counter-question: "Is not France as much interested as ourselves that we should be able to intervene promptly against Germany?" But the ambassador insisted that "the Russian general staff ought not to take any measures without having consulted with the French general staff," and he asked M. Sazonov for immediate assurances.*

M. Paléologue then composed a telegram to be sent to Paris. On account of the extreme importance of the information, M. Basily suggested using the very complicated Russian cipher, as the French cipher might be known to the Germans. A secretary of embassy went back with Basily to the Pechevsky Most to send the message. As it was being ciphered, the news was received that the general mobilization had been postponed; as this was confirmed by the French military attaché and by Sazonov himself, the secretary omitted from the telegram the sentence stating that the general mobilization was being begun secretly.† So the telegram, after a reference to the *démarche* of Count Pourtalès and the mobilization of eight Austrian corps, stated only that

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* Paléologue, I, 35–36.

† Recouly, pp. 160–161.

> the tone in which Count Pourtalès delivered this communication has decided the Russian Government this very night to order the mobilization of the thirteen army corps which are to operate against Austria.*

The ambassador appears to have approved the conduct of his subordinate and not to have notified his government that the general mobilization had been decided upon and then rescinded.†

At midnight or shortly after, M. Sazonov and Count Pourtalès held their fourth conversation of the day.‡ The Russian minister once more urged that Germany should participate in a conference *à quatre,* "in order to find a way to persuade Austria by friendly means to drop those demands which infringe on the sovereignty of Serbia." The German ambassador, while promising to report this to Berlin, replied that since Russia had decided to take "the fateful step" of mobilization, "the whole Austro-Serbian matter faded into the background in face of the danger of a European conflagration." When he explained that his communication earlier in the evening had reference to "the automatic effect" which Russian mobilization must have on Germany "in consequence of the Austro-German alliance," Sazonov retorted that "it was no longer possible to revoke the order for mobilization and that the Austrian mobilization was responsible for it."§ Russia's "vital interests," he said, required that Serbia should not sink to the level of a vassal of Austria, "should not become a Bokhara"; but Pourtalès, beyond remarking that his emperor and his government "had not failed to give good advice in Vienna," would not hold out much hope that Germany would "try to restrain a Great Power which had decided to take up arms in a just cause."|| From both the mili-

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* Paléologue to Bienvenu-Martin, telegram, 29 July; F 100.

† His British colleague, however, reported that it had been decided to issue the order for partial mobilization, "and at the same time to commence preparations for general mobilization." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 302.

‡ Pourtalès says that Sazonov sent for him. According to Schilling, p. 50, the ambassador telephoned for the interview.

§ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, 4.30 A. M.; G 401. Pourtalès got the impression that William's telegram had not failed of effect on Nicholas, but that "the minister is working hard to keep the Tsar firm."

|| Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, 9.30 A. M.; G 412.

tary and the political point of view, the argument had now got into a vicious circle.

Was there no way out? In point of fact, all unknown as yet to the Russian Government, a formula had been devised independently and almost simultaneously by the German and British Governments which seemed to them to offer an avenue of escape.

CHAPTER XV

A FORMULA FOR PEACE

OF the events described in the last chapter, which carried the story so far as St. Petersburg was concerned down to the early morning hours of 30 July, only the fact that the Russian Government had decided to order partial mobilization was known in the other capitals. The controversy within Russian official circles about partial and general mobilization was not revealed until long afterward and played no part in determining the conduct of other governments. Meanwhile, during the two days 28 July and 29 July, while Russia was preparing her military measures, a new diplomatic situation was slowly shaping itself which, in turn, was not yet known to the Russian Government. The key to this new situation is to be found in the attitude of Great Britain and in the growing fear of the German Government that British policy was being oriented in a direction openly favorable to France and Russia.

THE HESITATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN

From the very beginning of the crisis, the British Government had been, as we have seen, subjected to pressure from St. Petersburg to declare its solidarity with Russia and France and from Berlin to restrain those same countries. Sir Edward Grey personally desired that Great Britain should support France if war came, not because of any commitments, but on the ground of British interests:

> To stand aside would mean the domination of Germany; the subordination of France and Russia; the isolation of Britain; the hatred of her by both those who feared and those who wished for her intervention in the war; and ultimately Germany would wield the whole power of the Continent.*

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* Grey, I, 336–337; American edition, I, 326.

His principal advisers agreed with him. On 27 July Sir Eyre Crowe wrote:

> His Majesty's Government will be faced with the question whether, in a quarrel so imposed by Austria on an unwilling France, Great Britain will stand idly aside, or take sides. The question is a momentous one, which it is not for a departmental minute to elaborate.
>
> It is difficult not to remember the position of Prussia in 1805, when she insisted on keeping out of the war which she could not prevent from breaking out between the other Powers over questions not, on their face, of direct interest to Prussia.
>
> The war was waged without Prussia in 1805. But in 1806 she fell a victim to the Power that had won in 1805, and no one was ready to help her or to prevent her political ruin and partition.*

In the opinion of Sir Arthur Nicolson, "there is very little doubt, supposing we were called on to take a share, that we should not hesitate to do our duty."† The foreign office, then, was quite decided as to the proper course for Great Britain to take.

The cabinet, however, was not. Beginning on 27 July, "every day there were long cabinets from eleven [A. M.] onward."‡ At the first of these meetings, Sir Edward Grey communicated Sir George Buchanan's telegram of 24 July reporting the appeal of M. Sazonov for a promise of solidarity and indicating the intention of Russia and France "to make strong stand."§ He then, "in his own quiet way . . . made a memorable pronouncement":

> The time had come, he said, when the Cabinet was bound to make up its mind plainly whether we were to take an active part with the two other Powers of the Entente, or to stand aside in the general European question, and preserve an absolute neutrality.
>
> We could no longer defer decision. Things were moving very

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* Minute on B 170.

† Nicolson to Buchanan, private, 28 July; B 239.

‡ Churchill, I, 200; American edition, I, 212.

§ B 101; see above, I, 500.

> rapidly. We could no longer wait on accident and postpone. If the Cabinet was for neutrality, he did not think that he was the man to carry out such a policy.

The cabinet had "a moment or two of breathless silence," after which Lord Morley, the lord president of the council, expressed his satisfaction that Sir Edward Grey "had brought the inexorable position, to which circumstances had now brought us, plainly and definitely before us." His narrative continues:

> We rambled, as even the best Cabinets are apt to do, from the cogent riddle that the European Sphinx or Sphinxes had posed, into incidental points and secondary aspects. I could not, on the instant, gather with any certainty in which direction opinion was inclining. No wonder. Everybody had suddenly awakened to the startling fact that nothing less than the continued existence of the Ministry was this time—the first time—in sharp peril from differences within, and not from the House of Commons.*

One may speculate whether the cabinet as a whole viewed the problem as keenly from the point of view of party solidarity as did Lord Morley; but it is evident that in spite of Sir Edward Grey's appeal, no decision was taken. On that day, war had not yet broken out, and it was contrary to both cabinet usage and British temperament to deal with hypothetical cases. So Sir Edward Grey had no clear lead to take with the other governments. He could do no more than urge that the Serbian reply be taken as a basis of negotiations.†

In the foreign office the already considerable suspicion of German motives had deepened into a conviction that the German Government was associating itself with "a most cynical and desperate measure,"‡ and that "all now depends on what line Germany may be prepared to take."§ Late on the evening of 27 July it was learned that Berlin had declined the proposal for a conference. The Downing Street officials were quite discouraged. Sir Eyre Crowe minuted on the telegram:

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* John Viscount Morley, *Memorandum on Resignation* (London, 1928), pp. 1–3. Morley gives the date of Grey's communication and statement as "on or about July 24–27." Buchanan's telegram arrived too late (8 P. M.) for the cabinet meeting of 24 July; there is no record of a meeting on 25 July; the next day was Sunday, which Grey spent in the country.

† See above, p. 69.

‡ Minute of Nicolson on B 174.

§ Minute of Crowe on B 175.

> So far as we knew, the German Government has up to now said not a single word at Vienna in the direction of restraint or moderation. If a word had been said, we may be certain that the German Government would claim credit for having spoken at all. The inference is not reassuring as to Germany's goodwill.*

Sir Arthur Nicholson, after noting that Germany "brushed on one side the idea of a small conference here as being an impractical suggestion," complained:

> Then Lichnowsky says that he is so pleased that Anglo-German co-operation seems likely to be successful. His interpretation of the word "co-operation" must be totally different from that which is usually accepted.†

And Sir Edward Grey "really felt angry" with Bethmann-Hollweg and Jagow for "their supineness and passive obstruction."

> I well remember [he wrote later] the impulse to say that, as Germany forbade a conference, I could do no more, and that it was on Germany that the responsibility must rest if war came.

But the impulse was put aside:

> To have acted on it would have been to give up hope of peace, and to make it the object of diplomatic action to throw the blame for war on Germany in advance. That would mean not only ceasing to work for peace, but making war certain.

He was therefore "still ready to co-operate in any other way for peace that von Bethmann-Hollweg could desire and preferred."‡

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* Minute on B 185.

† Nicolson to Buchanan, private, 28 July; B 239.

‡ Grey, I, 322; American edition, I, 311.

The decision to let the German Government propose the method of mediation guided British policy on 28 July. While Berlin was informed that the conference "would not be an arbitration, but a private and informal discussion" for discovering a solution acceptable to both Austria and Russia, nevertheless, since there was a prospect of a direct exchange of views between them, which "was the most preferable method of all," the proposal for a conference was suspended.* In order, apparently, not to experience another rebuff from the German Government, a suggestion of the Marquis di San Giuliano that Serbia might be induced to accept the Austro-Hungarian note in its entirety "on advice of four Powers invited to conference," was not taken up.† Finally, the plan was considered of putting the matter of mediation up to the German Government. Sir Edward Goschen and his French and Italian colleagues had all been told by Herr von Jagow that "he desired to work with us for maintenance of general peace." They deduced that if his wish was sincere, he was objecting only to the "form" of the British proposal and therefore suggested to Sir Edward Grey that

> it might be possible for you to put proposal in another form omitting word "conference," or perhaps even to propose to him that he himself should suggest lines on which he would find it possible to work with us.‡

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 28 July; B 218.

† Rodd to Grey, telegram, 27 July, received 28 July, noon; B 202. The telegram was repeated to the British ambassador in Berlin, but without instructions to discuss the matter with the Wilhelmstrasse. In Nicolson's opinion, "If direct conversations are to take place between Vienna and St. Petersburg we had better not confuse the matter by making any fresh proposal." Minute on B 215.

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 215. The idea apparently originated with Jules Cambon. Cf. J. Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 27 July; F 74. The French foreign office gathered from the German ambassador that "Austrians are particularly suspicious of words 'intervention,' 'mediation' and 'conference,' " and suggested that "care should be taken to speak of conversations, moderating advice, &c." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 183. Bertie agreed. "If you get together meetings between yourself and the French, German, and Italian ambassadors call them consultations, for the Austrians would resent a sort of repetition of the London reunions which ended in being dubbed the London Conference. They would consider that they were being treated as a Balkan Minor State." Bertie to Grey, private, 27 July; B 192.

The British minister was, however, cautious in his reply:

> German Government having accepted principle of mediation by the four Powers between Austria and Russia if necessary, I am ready to propose that German Minister for Foreign Affairs should suggest lines on which this principle may be applied, but I will keep the idea in reserve till we see how conversations between Austria and Russia progress.*

The German Government, then, was free to follow its own line for the solution of the problem. On this day it did, in fact, begin to move. But at least one member of the British Government intended to take no chances. The first lord of the admiralty was determined

> to make sure that the diplomatic situation did not get ahead of the naval situation, and that the Grand Fleet should be in its War Station before Germany could know whether or not we should be in the war, and *therefore if possible before we had decided ourselves.*†

Already on 27 July the Second Fleet (of older battleships) had been ordered to complete their crews as far as possible, officers were recalled to the ships on which they had served during the mobilization, and the Second and Third Fleets (the latter consisting of the oldest ships) were ordered to complete with coal, stores and ammunition. Certain ships were shifted. Finally, a telegram was sent to all foreign stations stating that war was "by no means impossible," and that preparations should be made to shadow ships of the Central Powers.‡

The next day, 28 July, orders were issued that the flotillas should complete to full crews and take all precautions against surprise. At 5 P. M. the First Fleet, which was still at Portland, was ordered to proceed the next morning to Scapa Flow, in the north of Scotland, by the North Sea route, timing its speed so as to pass Dover at night with lights out. At 7 A. M. on 29 July it put to sea. "Seeing what our engagements were to France," remarks the official historian, "no less could be done." "We were now in a position, whatever happened," Mr. Churchill has explained with satisfaction, "to control events, and it was not easy to see how this advantage could be taken from us."*

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 28 July, B 223.

† Churchill, I, 200; American edition, I, 211.

‡ Corbett, *Naval Operations*, I, 25. Churchill, I, 206; American edition, I, 218.

The German Emperor's Proposal, 28 July

On the morning of 28 July the German Emperor received three documents. One was the first of the three warning telegrams sent by Prince Lichnowsky on the previous day.† The second was a message from Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, who said that he had "submitted" to Count Berchtold Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that the Serbian reply should be taken as a basis of discussion.

> If we reject *a limine* [he continued] and entirely the rôle of mediator, especially as London and Paris are continuing to bring pressure to bear in St. Petersburg, we should be regarded by England and the whole world as responsible for the conflagration and as the real instigators of the war. That would on the one hand make it impossible for us to maintain the present favorable sentiment in our own country, and on the other force England to abandon her neutrality.‡

Herr von Bethmann, it will be observed, said nothing about preventing the war; on the contrary, he made clear that "it will be Austria's business to decide what to do about it [Grey's suggestion]." In view of the decision "to fight the business through," taken a few hours before, the chancellor's words inevitably suggest that he was thinking only of absolving Germany from responsibility and of keeping England neutral.

For once William II did not make any marginal notes; but he underlined certain passages in Prince Lichnowsky's telegram which mentioned the "pressure exerted from St. Petersburg" on Serbia and expressed the hopes of Sir Edward Grey for the future "if we two should once again succeed in assuring the peace of Europe by means of our mutual influence on our allies." It looks as if the Emperor, impressed by the news from London, was already considering the desirability of mediation.

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* Corbett, I, 26; Churchill, I, 213; American edition, I, 226.
† G 258. See above, p. 69.
‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 27 July, sent 28 July, 5 A. M.; G 283.

The third document was the text of the Serbian reply to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum. William II found it "a brilliant performance" and "a great moral victory for Austria." "With it," he noted, "every reason for war disappears and Giesl might have remained quietly in Belgrade!"* He thereupon addressed to Herr von Jagow a remarkable letter:

> I am convinced that on the whole the wishes of the Danube Monarchy have been acceded to. The few reservations that Serbia makes in regard to individual points can, in my opinion, well be cleared up by negotiation. But it contains the announcement *orbi et urbi* of a capitulation of the most humiliating kind, and with it *every reason for war* is removed.

A most astonishing verdict from the man who for more than three weeks had been demanding immediate and violent action against Serbia and who had deliberately accepted the possible consequences of such action! Was this simply one of those sudden changes of mind of which William II was always capable, just another illustration of his unstable and emotional character? Or did the Emperor, as on other occasions of grave danger, perceive the realities of the situation better than his ministers? It is at least worth recalling that he had learned on the previous day that "Serbia's answer to the ultimatum . . . is said to agree to nearly all the points, including the punishment of all officers,"† and that, so far as is known, the fact made no impression on him. But along with the text of the Serbian reply, he also read the warning telegram from Prince Lichnowsky. Perhaps this latter document helps to explain his verdict on the Serbian reply. In any case, he proceeded to make a definite proposal:

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* Comment on G 271.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 27 July; G 245.

> The Serbs are Orientals, therefore liars, tricksters and masters of evasion. In order that these fine promises may become truth and facts, a *douce violence* will have to be applied. This would have to be arranged on the basis that Austria should occupy Belgrade as a *guarantee* that the promises would be enforced and carried out and hold it until the *petita* had *actually* been executed. This is also necessary in order to give the army, which has been mobilized for the third time *to no purpose* [*umsonst*], the outward *satisfaction d'honneur* of an apparent success in the eyes of the world and at least the sensation of having stood on foreign soil. Without this the abandonment of the campaign might arouse very bad feeling against the dynasty which would be highly serious. So if Your Excellency agrees with my opinion, I would propose to say to Austria: Serbia has been forced to back down in a very humiliating manner, and we congratulate you. Naturally, as a result, a *ground for war no longer exists.* But of course a *guarantee* is necessary that the promises will be *carried out.* That could well be secured by a *temporary* occupation of a part of Serbia, similar to the way we kept troops in France in 1871 until the milliards were paid. *On this basis* I am ready to *mediate for peace* with Austria.*

Strictly speaking, of course, the occupation of Belgrade would be an act of war, but the agitated Emperor was evidently now willing to restrain Austria-Hungary to a certain extent.

The Emperor's reversal of policy placed the Wilhelmstrasse in a most difficult position. It had urged Austria-Hungary to proceed immediately with military operations against Serbia; it had made clear that British suggestions for negotiation on the basis of the Serbian reply had been transmitted for form's sake only and need not be considered seriously; it knew that the declaration of war against Serbia was imminent. To do now what the Emperor desired, that is, say to Vienna that "all ground for war had disappeared" and that the Serbian reply must be accepted, provided its promises were carried out, would amount to revoking its promises and repudiating its own advice. Even to transmit such a suggestion, let alone urge its acceptance, would be perilously close to an insult to Count Berchtold. Moreover, Count Berchtold had already intimated that in the opinion of General Conrad the time had come, if the reports of Russian military measures were confirmed, "to inform St. Petersburg . . . that this mobilization on the southern and western frontiers of Russia is so threatening that corresponding counter-measures would have to be taken."*

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* William II to Jagow, 28 July, 10 A. M.; G 293. (About an hour later, Berchtold sent his declaration of war to Serbia.) Strangely enough, the Emperor expected that his proposal would be taken to Vienna by an official of the foreign office; Tirpitz, II, 4. Just why this method should be preferred at a moment when the peace of Europe hung by a thread is not clear. Later in the day the chancellor reported that "as there is no longer any regular railway communication with Vienna," he was "compelled to make the *démarche* by telegram." Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 28 July; G 308.

To escape from its dilemma, the German Government first of all tried to evade the request of Vienna for representations to Russia. It declared such a step unnecessary:

> Military reports concerning Russia so far known here only as rumors and not yet confirmed.
>
> Even in General von Moltke's view, categorical declaration at St. Petersburg might appear premature to-day.†

Secondly, a telegram was sent to London stating that "we consider Austro-Hungarian procedure as nothing but a means of putting an end once for all to the Serbian provocation" and expressing confidence that Prince Lichnowsky "would be able to make Sir Edward Grey see our point of view"‡—which may have been intelligible as a diplomatic manœuvre, but was in contradiction to the views of the Emperor.

How little the German foreign office agreed with the Emperor is indicated in a long despatch sent the same day to the Prussian representatives at the other German courts. Declaring that the Serbian reply showed that "the ruling powers in Serbia are not disposed to give up the policy hitherto followed and their work of agitation," it stated that

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July, received 28 July, 4 A. M.; G 281. See above, p. 81. Conrad also wished Rumania to be invited to join in this declaration.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 28 July, 3.20 P. M.; G 299. The reports received spoke of extensive preparations in the Riga district and of alleged mobilization at Kiev, Warsaw, Vilna and Odessa. Consulate at Riga, Hauschild, and Pourtalès to foreign office, telegrams, 28 July; G 294, 295, 296.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 28 July, 8.49 P. M.; G 314.

> there will be no course left for the Austro-Hungarian Government, unless it is willing finally to sacrifice its position as a Great Power, but to enforce its demands by strong pressure, and, if necessary, by resort to military measures.

This language certainly implies that the Wilhelmstrasse expected the Cabinet of Vienna to carry through its original policy and was not prepared to recommend a modification in the sense proposed by the Emperor. The despatch also asserted that Russia "alone will be responsible if a European war arises out of the Austro-Serbian affair, which all the other Great Powers desire to localize," thus revealing the deep concern of the foreign office over the matter of placing the blame for the ultimate rupture.*

About the time that this despatch was sent off, news was received from Prince Lichnowsky that the members of the Austro-Hungarian embassy in London were saying that "Austria was concerned only with the destruction of Serbia," that "Serbia was to be 'beaten to the ground,' " and that "it was the intention to make a present of portions of Serbia to Bulgaria (and presumably also to Albania)."† Upon this report the German chancellor commented:

> This duplicity of Austria is intolerable. They refuse to give us information about their programme, state expressly that the remarks of Count Hoyos which hinted at a partition of Serbia were purely personal; in St. Petersburg they are lambs without a wicked thought in their minds, and in London their embassy talks of giving away parts of Serbian territory to Bulgaria and Albania.

Herr von Bethmann now knew that any declaration by the Cabinet of Vienna on the matter of territorial disinterestedness, while not perhaps exactly untrue, was highly disingenuous and calculated to deceive.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to the Prussian ministers, 28 July; G 307. The hour of sending is not indicated, but it is placed by the editors of the German documents in the afternoon of 28 July and well *after* the Emperor's letter.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July, received 3.45 P. M.; G 301.

We can now understand the action taken by the chancellor with reference to the proposal of William II. A telegram was sent to Vienna at 10.15 P. M., twelve hours after the Emperor's letter was written, which seems an inordinately long delay, even when allowance is made for the transmission of the letter from Potsdam to Berlin, preparation of the message, and its coding.* One cannot avoid suspecting, in view of the evident sentiments of the foreign office, that action was delayed until the news was received, at 6.39 P. M., that the declaration of war against Serbia had been issued.† The telegram, very long and marked "urgent," is an interesting document. Herr von Bethmann began by saying that "the Austro-Hungarian Government has declared definitely to Russia that it does not contemplate territorial acquisitions in Serbia," but "in spite of repeated inquiries about its intentions has left us in the dark." Furthermore, the Serbian reply made it evident that "Serbia has met the Austrian demands in so far-reaching a measure that in the event of a wholly intransigent attitude being assumed by the Austro-Hungarian Government, a gradual revulsion of public opinion from its side will have to be reckoned with throughout Europe." The chancellor then continued:

> According to the statements of the Austrian general staff, actual military operations against Serbia will be possible only on 12 August. In consequence the Imperial Government will find itself in the extraordinarily difficult position of being in the interval exposed to the proposals of the other Powers for mediation and a conference, and if it continues to maintain the reserve which it has hitherto shown to such proposals, the odium of having been responsible for a world war will recoil upon itself, even, finally, in the eyes of the German people. A successful war on three fronts cannot be begun and conducted

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* The change from the plan to send an official to Vienna (see above, p. 123) may have contributed to the delay.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 311.

> on such a basis. It is an imperative necessity that the responsibility for the eventual extension of the war to those not immediately concerned should, under all circumstances, be borne by Russia. In his last conversation with Count Pourtalès, M. Sazonov already admitted that Serbia must receive her "deserved lesson." At any rate the minister did not oppose the Austrian point of view so unconditionally as theretofore. Accordingly it is not fair to draw the conclusion that the Russian Government will not refuse to recognize that once the mobilization of the Austro-Hungarian army has begun, the very honor of its arms requires an invasion of Serbia. [!] But it will be able to reconcile itself with this idea the more easily if the Cabinet of Vienna repeats in St. Petersburg the positive declaration that territorial acquisitions in Serbia lie entirely outside its view, and that its military measures are directed simply to a temporary occupation of Belgrade and other specific points in Serbian territory, in order to exact from the Serbian Government the complete fulfilment of the Austrian demands and to secure guarantees of future good behavior, to which Austria-Hungary has an unconditional right after its experiences with Serbia. An occupation would be suggested like the German occupation of French territory after the Peace of Frankfort for ensuring compliance with the demand for a war indemnity. As soon as the Austrian demands were complied with, evacuation would follow. If the Russian Government does not recognize the justice of this point of view, it will have against it the public opinion of all Europe, which is on the point of turning away from Austria. A further result would be that the general diplomatic and probably also the military situation will change very materially to the advantage of Austria-Hungary and its allies.

Thus far, the telegram leaves the impression that the chancellor was giving effect to the Emperor's ideas. But whereas William had proposed that the Serbian reply should be accepted and that Belgrade should be occupied as a guarantee of execution, Herr von Bethmann was suggesting the occupation as a means to secure "the complete fulfilment of the Austrian demands," that is, of the demands embodied in the ultimatum. In so far as he asked Count Berchtold to be content with an occupation of Belgrade and not to proceed, as General Conrad desired, to the complete destruction of the Serbian army, the German chancellor may be said to have advised Austria-Hungary to make a concession. But it was the ultimatum and its implications which had aroused the ire of Russia, and so long as German policy aimed to secure for the Dual Monarchy the acceptance of the ultimatum, it was not asking the Cabinet of Vienna to concede anything essential. Moreover, the dominating idea of the telegram seems to be less that of securing a concession from Austria-Hungary than the desire to put Russia in the wrong. Certainly Herr von Bethmann is not to be censured for wishing to put the responsibility for a European war on Russia; but his real motive is revealed by the last paragraph of the telegram:

> Your Excellency [Tschirschky] will speak immediately to Count Berchtold emphatically in this sense and arrange for an appropriate *démarche* in St. Petersburg. You will have very carefully to avoid giving the impression that we wish to hold Austria back. It is simply the question of finding a way to realize Austria's aim of cutting the vital cord of the Great Serbian propaganda without at the same time bringing on a world war; and if this cannot in the end be avoided, of improving as far as possible the conditions under which it will have to be conducted. Telegraph reply.*

In other words, no real pressure was exerted on Vienna to accept the plan of a *'Halt in Belgrad';* it was recommended, and that was all.

To make his *démarche* appear in as favorable a light as possible, the chancellor advised the Emperor to send a telegram to the Tsar: "should it finally come to war, such a telegram would place Russia's responsibility in the clearest light."† And His Majesty sent a telegram, appealing to the "common interest" of all sovereigns in the punishment of regicide and saying, "I am exerting my utmost influence to induce the Austrians to deal straightly to arrive to a satisfactory understanding with you."‡ The chancellor himself telegraphed to St. Petersburg:

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 28 July; G 323.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 28 July; G 308.

‡ William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 28 July, 10.45 P. M.; G 335. For the full text, see above, p. 99.

> We are continually endeavoring to persuade Vienna to have a frank discussion with St. Petersburg, with the object of making clear to Russia in an unobjectionable and, it is to be hoped, satisfactory, fashion, the purpose and scope of the Austrian action against Serbia. The declaration of war which has occurred in the meantime in no way changes the situation.*

But he did not reveal to the Russian Government, any more than he did to his own master, the exact nature of his advice to Vienna; while the statement that "the declaration of war in no ways changes the situation" was, in view of all that M. Sazonov had said, distinctly naïve.

Herr von Bethmann's remark about a war on "three fronts" evidently implied that Great Britain must be kept neutral.† Accordingly, during the evening he sent for the British ambassador, to say that "he was most anxious that Germany should work together with England for maintenance of general peace." In spite of the refusal of the conference, Sir Edward Grey "could be assured that he [Bethmann] was doing his very best both at Vienna and St. Petersburg to get the two Governments to discuss the situation directly with each other and in a friendly way" and "he had great hopes that such discussions would take place and lead to a satisfactory result."‡ But he did not speak specifically of the *démarche* which he had made or was about to make in Vienna. Certainly it would have been good tactics, if he took the step seriously, to inform Sir Edward Goschen of it confidentially, in order to allay the rising irritation which Prince Lichnowsky was observing in London. The fact that the German chancellor did not show his hand to either Russia or England reveals the extraordinary difficulty in which he found himself. Clearly, he desired Austria-Hungary to go ahead with its plans, provided it could be done safely, *i. e.,* without bringing England into the war. But the prospect of this was beginning to look dubious. Yet if he really put the screws on his ally, he would not only create consternation in Vienna and Budapest, but the Potsdam promises could and doubtless would be flung in his face. What Herr von Bethmann did, therefore, on 28 July was to offer certain advice to Count Berchtold which, if followed, would permit the Central Powers to saddle Russia with the responsibility for the war and thereby, so he hoped, induce Great Britain to remain neutral.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 28 July; G 315.

† Tschirschky appears so to have interpreted the purpose of the telegram, according to Berchtold's version of their conversation on 29 July; A III 24.

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 28 July, 12 midnight; B 249.

This made desirable the taking of as few military precautions as possible. Consequently the chancellor, with the support of the foreign office, opposed the request of the minister of war for the recall of the troops to their garrison quarters; but the matter was carried to the Emperor, and he sanctioned the proposal of the minister of war.* But this statement of Falkenhayn's biographer does not reveal the full significance of the Emperor's decision. According to the German official history,

> The ministry of war ordered the recall of those troops absent from their garrison quarters which in the event of mobilization were to be "immediately" or "speedily" prepared [*marschbereit*] for the purpose of guarding the frontier and for definite special tasks [*bestimmte Sonderaufgaben*].†

The phrase "definite special tasks" is arresting. It is not explained, but probably it refers to the seizure of Liège by six brigades on a peace footing, that is, before mobilization, and to the seizure of the Luxemburg railways, the immediate execution of which the instant war began was an all-important feature of the German plan of campaign.

The fact that General von Falkenhayn had to carry this matter to the Emperor shows that the contest between the "civilian" chancellor and the soldiers had begun. Herr von Bethmann, whose policy was responsible for the situation, apparently believed war, that is, a European war, likely,* but would not face the fact squarely. Generals von Moltke† and von Falkenhayn likewise regarded war as certain, but wished to face the fact by taking the necessary military precautions. The contest was to be renewed on the following day with vigor.

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* Zwehl, p. 56.

† *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 101–102. In addition, the wireless stations were placed under guard of the security police; protection of the railways by their own personnel (ordered the day before) went into effect.

Vienna and Berlin, 28 July

General Conrad, it will be recalled,‡ as soon as he learned that Count Berchtold, yielding to the pressure of Berlin, had decided to declare war on Serbia at once, had represented to the foreign minister the desirability of getting Germany to warn Russia against any measures of mobilization. But Count Berchtold had not done more than speak to Herr von Tschirschky about the matter. So as soon as the chief of staff was informed that the Emperor Francis Joseph had approved the declaration of war, he renewed his representations, and on the afternoon of 28 July discussed the question in a personal interview with Count Berchtold and the other highest officials of the Monarchy. He explained that

> for military reasons, above all, they had to know where they were—whether they had to count on Russian intervention or whether they could make their calculations on the basis of a localized war against Serbia.

It depended on this "momentous decision" whether the 'B' mobilization would suffice or whether the 'R' mobilization must be ordered; and he had to know by 1 August. He therefore insisted that a demand be made upon Berlin for an appropriate *démarche*—"a polite communication," if an ultimatum was undesirable—in St. Petersburg.§

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* On this day the offer of Turkey to form an alliance with Germany was accepted. Bethmann-Hollweg to Wangenheim, telegram, 28 July, 9.30 P. M.; G 320. See below, p. 434. Equally significant was the message sent to Stockholm: "Swedish declaration of neutrality would probably render the possible future alteration of Sweden's attitude more difficult." Jagow to Reichenau, telegram, 28 July, 9.15 P. M.; G 319.

† Cf. his memorandum drafted on the evening of 28 July; see below, pp. 137–138.

‡ See above, pp. 80–81.

§ Conrad, IV, 136–138.

This plain talk caused Count Berchtold to act. He instructed his ambassador in Berlin to inform the German Government "immediately" that according to the statement of General Sukhomlinov, "the military districts opposite Austria-Hungary, Kiev, Odessa, Moscow, and Kazan, would be mobilized if our troops crossed the Serbian frontier."

> In these circumstances [Count Szögyény was to say] the chief of the general staff considers it *unconditionally* necessary to know for certain whether we can march against Serbia with strong forces or whether we shall have to turn our principal forces against Russia. The whole plan of campaign against Serbia depends on the answer to this question. If Russia actually mobilizes the districts mentioned, it would be imperative, in view of the importance for Russia of gaining time, that Austria-Hungary, and in the existing situation, Germany also, should *at once* take the most far-reaching counter-measures.

Count Berchtold therefore "urgently" requested the Cabinet of Berlin to consider

> whether it should not be pointed out to Russia in a friendly manner that the mobilization of the above-mentioned districts would amount to a threat against Austria-Hungary and that, if it were ordered, would have to be answered by the most far-reaching military counter-measures not only by the Monarchy but by the allied German Empire.

He thought it desirable that the *démarche* should be made by Germany alone, though he was ready to join in it. He suggested that Rumania should be associated with it, if possible. But "this clarification [of the situation], if it is to accomplish its purpose, must be effected *by 1 August at the latest.*"*

From both the military and the political point of view, the Austro-Hungarian request was entirely justified. At what hour on 29 July it was communicated to the German Government is not known. But Count Szögyény was instructed to do so "immediately." He carried out his instructions verbally, but at the request of Herr von Jagow, handed in a memorandum,* which reached the foreign office in the course of the afternoon.† The probability is, therefore, that the action was taken sometime during the morning.

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* Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 28 July, 11 P. M.; A II 80. Bethmann's telegram of 28 July (G 299; see above, p. 124) refusing to give effect to Berchtold's similar request of the evening before (G 281) was received at the German embassy at 6 P. M. Tschirschky may have informed Berchtold, which would have strengthened Conrad's hand.

29 July in Berlin

As in St. Petersburg, so in Berlin, Wednesday, 29 July, was a day of great activity and growing excitement. The press, while generally supporting the rejection of the conference, could not conceal the fact that the situation was becoming dangerous. Reports of the measures taken by the British admiralty caused the stocks of the Hamburg-American Line and the North German Lloyd to drop several points, and one prominent financier, Herr Friedländer, could find no buyer for his shares.‡ Indeed only concerted action by the leading banks averted a financial panic.§

At last the news from St. Petersburg began to be ominous. Prince Trubetzkoi, who belonged to the court, had said that after the Serbian reply, "we cannot leave our brethren in the lurch" and that the German Emperor should advise his ally "not to draw the bow too tight."|| Probably this change of feeling in court circles weighed more heavily with the German Government than the irritation of Sazonov, which, however, Pourtalès now no longer doubted or concealed.¶ From Austrian sources it was reported that mobilization had been ordered, but not yet published, in Odessa, Kiev, and Warsaw (that is, against Germany as well as against Austria), and that

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* Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 3.

† Note on G 352.

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 281.

§ Oppenheimer to Goschen, 29 July; B 322.

|| Chelius to William II, telegram, 28 July; G 337.

¶ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 338. Sazonov, interpreting the Austrian attitude toward the Serbian reply as proof that war was desired "under all circumstances," appealed once more for German mediation.

preparatory steps were being taken throughout European Russia, "without any special exception as regards the German frontier."* The German general staff itself received news that "troops of various arms have been brought in for the reinforcement of the frontier guards, who have been mobilized everywhere" and that notices were said to have been sent out to reservists to hold themselves in readiness.†

In the west the French were reported to have instituted military protection of the railways, to be arming the forts at Belfort, and perhaps even to be calling up the last class of reservists; an officer of the French general staff was said to have remarked that "German preparations . . . were far exceeded by those of the French."‡ A lengthy message from the naval attaché in London, received the night before, stated that the British Second Fleet was fully manned and that mobilization was being prepared.§

It was to deal with this situation, ostensibly, that important telegrams were despatched to St. Petersburg and Paris at 12.50 P. M. Count Pourtalès was instructed

> to call M. Sazonov's serious attention to the fact that further continuance of mobilization measures by Russia would force us to mobilize, and that a European war could then scarcely be prevented.||

Baron von Schoen was asked to inform the French Government that since "reports of French preparations for war are becoming more frequent, Germany would have to take measures of self-protection":

> We should have to proclaim 'danger of war' [*Kriegsgefahr*],

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegrams, 28 July; G 327, 331. Cf. A II 74, 77.

† General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372. Numerous details are given; reports of mobilization in Vilna and Warsaw were, however, "still unconfirmed."

‡ General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372. *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 29. *Deutschland Schuldig?* no. 7, Anlage ii.

§ Groos, *Der Krieg in der Nordsee*, p. 14.

|| Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 29 July; G 342. For the effect of this telegram in St. Petersburg, see above, pp. 105–108.

> which, although it would not yet mean mobilization or the calling in of any reservists, would nevertheless increase the tension. We continue to hope for the maintenance of peace.*

Taken by themselves, these *démarches* lead one to infer that the Wilhelmstrasse was still clinging to the idea of localization of the war, which it hoped to achieve by direct threats to Russia and France.

One is struck, however, by the tone of the communication to Russia, which, while not an ultimatum, was harsh and abrupt, in marked contrast with the conciliatory messages of the day before.† Moreover, it called for the cessation of all Russian military measures, although Herr von Jagow had said that Germany would not object so long as those measures were taken only against Austria.‡ The demand made upon Russia was, however, precisely that proposed by the Austro-Hungarian *démarche,* which was probably executed during the morning. One may accordingly surmise, though one cannot prove, that the note was sent to Russia partly to give effect to the wishes of Austria-Hungary.

Further explanation is probably offered by the fact that at midday (unfortunately, the exact hour is not known) a conference took place between the chancellor, the minister of war, and the chief of the general staff. Of their discussion nothing is known save the statement of General von Falkenhayn's biographer:

> Falkenhayn was not able to impose on the chancellor his wish for the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' [*drohende Kriegsgefahr*], because even Moltke would agree only to the military protection of the means of communication [*Verkehrskunstbauten*].§

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, 29 July; G 341.

† G 300, 315; see above, pp. 102, 129.

‡ See above, p. 94. The conclusion drawn by the German general staff from its information about Russian measures of 29 July was that while secret preparations were going ahead, including movements of troops along the German frontier, the order for mobilization, at least against Germany, had not been issued. *Russlands Vorbereitungen für den Weltkrieg,* pp. 23–24.

§ Zwehl, p. 56.

On the other hand, the Bavarian military attaché in Berlin, Major-General Wenninger, writing it is true before he had learned of the result of the conference but on the basis of information supplied to him at the ministry of war during the morning, wrote thus:

> My impression to-day is that the war office and the general staff on one side and the chancellor and the foreign office on the other are ranged against each other. Unanimity prevails only in their irritation that Austria-Hungary has shown so little energy in her preparatory measures that another fortnight must elapse before the opening of military operations.
>
> The minister of war, supported by the chief of the general staff, urgently desires to take the military steps called for by the strained diplomatic situation and the constantly threatening danger of war. The chief of the general staff wishes to go still further; he is throwing all his influence in behalf of using the unusually favorable situation to make an aggressive move [*zum Losschlagen*]; he points out that France is at the moment in an embarrassing military position, and that Russia feels anything but sure of herself; finally the time of year is favorable, for the harvest has been for the most part gathered and the annual period of military instruction is completed.*
>
> The chancellor is applying the brake to these forward-driving elements with all his might and wishes to avoid everything which might lead to similar steps being taken by France and England and thus set the stone rolling.†

If, as the Bavarian general states, Moltke was pressing for war, why did he oppose the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' as Falkenhayn desired? Was not the attaché misinformed?

The explanation of this apparent contradiction is to be found in a memorandum which the chief of the general staff drew up the day before and sent to the chancellor on 29 July.* As this document is almost the only evidence from Moltke himself of his views in July, 1914, it must be analyzed in some detail and with great attention. He begins by justifying the Austro-Hungarian procedure (although, according to his later statement, he would have warned against it had he been consulted†).

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* "The precedent of 1870 was ominous; we all knew how Prussian militarism had availed itself of this time and season of the year at which to strike." Grey, I, 324; American edition, I, 313. This remark of the British foreign secretary has been bitterly repudiated by German writers, but it was apparently not lacking in justification, if Wenninger was correctly informed.

† Wenninger to war office; 29 July; Dirr, pp. 221–222; omitted from the first editions of the *Bayerische Dokumente*, and first published in the German pacifist monthly, *Die Menschheit*, no. 8. Cf. *Revue de Paris*, XXXI, iv, 285–286 (15 July, 1924).

> One would have thought that all Europe would be grateful to her. . . . The Austro-Serbian affair is a purely private quarrel in which, as has been said, nobody in Europe would have a deep-rooted interest and which would in no way threaten the peace of Europe, but on the contrary would establish it more firmly if Russia had not injected herself into it.

As Russia has announced that she will mobilize twelve army corps as soon as Austria advances into Serbia, Austria will be forced to order general mobilization, and from that moment "the collision between herself and Russia will become inevitable."

> But that is the *casus foederis* for Germany. If Germany is not to be false to her word and permit the annihilation of her ally through the superiority of Russia, she too must mobilize. And that will have the consequence of Russia mobilizing the rest of her military districts. But then Russia will be able to say, I am being attacked by Germany, and will thereby assure herself of the support of France, who is bound by treaty to take part in the war if her ally Russia is attacked. Thus the Franco-Russian alliance, so often praised as a strictly defensive compact, which had been created only to meet the aggressive plans of Germany, will become active, and the mutual butchery of the civilized nations of Europe will begin.

Russia has "cleverly contrived," said Moltke, to throw the responsibility on Austria, and assures Germany that she will undertake nothing against her; but "she knows perfectly well that

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* In Moltke, p. 3, the memorandum is dated 28 July; in G 349, the copy communicated to Bethmann, 29 July; it was sent to the Emperor on the evening of 28 July and to the chancellor the next day.

† See above, p. 59.

Germany cannot remain inactive in a warlike encounter between Russia and her ally," that Germany will be forced to mobilize, and that Russia can then say, " 'I did not want war, but Germany has precipitated it.' "

Moltke, if he can help it, does not intend to play the Russian game. Wherefore, although his information is that France "also appears to be taking measures preparatory to an eventual mobilization"* and that "Russia and France are moving hand in hand with their measures," he carefully refrains from asking for any German measures. Probably he knew that both Emperor and chancellor would oppose them; in any case they would spoil his political strategy. But one thing was imperative:

> With relation to the military measures which we have in view, should the case arise, it is of the greatest importance to ascertain as soon as possible whether Russia and France intend to let it come to a war with Germany. The further the preparations of our neighbors are carried, the quicker they will be able to complete their mobilization. Thus the military situation is becoming more unfavorable for us day by day, and can, if our prospective opponents further prepare themselves at their leisure, lead to consequences full of danger for us.†

Nowhere in the memorandum does Moltke declare his opposition to the war, which he clearly regards as certain to come; he only says that "Germany does not wish to precipitate [*herbeiführen*] this frightful war." Therefore she must do nothing which Russia can label as aggressive. But she must discover the intentions of Russia and France. If they really mean war, then they can be made responsible for it, and Germany can accept it without hesitation. Holding these views, the chief of staff logically opposed the measures which the minister of war wished to take. But it would be equally logical for him to insist on the despatch of a note which would force Russia to show her hand and make clear whether Germany could take military measures without appearing to be the aggressor. And if the Austro-Hungarian *démarche* had been made, he would have an additional argument for such a course. The chancellor, for his part, could not well object, because there was the chance that the note would intimidate Russia, and if it did not, then the task of saddling her with the responsibility for war would be easier.[*]

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* For the details of what had been reported on 28 July, see *Deutschland Schuldig?* no. 7, Anlage ii. The principal points were the return of troops to garrison, the recall of officers and men on leave, assembling of trains and motor trucks, and "summoning of reservists to Verdun."

† Moltke to Bethmann-Hollweg, 29 July; G 349.

As the afternoon wore on the dangers of the situation became more and more apparent, at least in the foreign office. A telegram from St. Petersburg stated that in court circles "a general war was considered almost inevitable,"[†] and yet another that M. Sazonov, because he could get no reply from Vienna to his request for direct conversations and because the Austro-Hungarian mobilization of eight corps "must be regarded as in part directed against Russia," regarded Austria's "good faith" as "questionable." For these reasons, the Russian Government had decided to order partial mobilization, although, M. Sazonov insisted, it "wished to avoid war, if it were in any way possible" and the Russian army could remain mobilized for weeks without crossing the frontier.[‡] Herr von Jagow heard the news with "horror."[§] In fact, he proceeded to retract the promise which he had made two days before, namely, that Germany would not have to reply to a Russian mobilization against Austria-Hungary alone.[||]

> This unexpected news [he said to the Russian ambassador] completely changed the situation, and he no longer saw any possibility of avoiding a European war. "If once you mobilize against Austria, then you will also take serious measures

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[*] According to a confidant of Bethmann, "it has long been known in Berlin" that on 29 July Moltke "urged the sending of an ultimatum to Russia." H. Delbrück, *Deutsch-englische Schulddiskussion zwischen Hans Delbrück und J. W. Headlam-Morley* (Berlin, 1921), p. 16. Professor Delbrück was unable to provide the writer with more precise information.

[†] Chelius to William II, telegram, 29 July; G 344.

[‡] Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 343.

[§] Sverbeyev to Sazonov, final report; Schilling, p. 61.

[||] See above, p. 94.

> against us. . . . We are compelled to proclaim mobilization against Russia, then that against France will follow," and if all the Great Powers stood under arms, war seemed to him unavoidable.

When the ambassador recalled the previous promise, the minister could only say that "the measures taken along the German frontier compelled Germany also to think of her own protection."*

That Austria-Hungary had not begun conversations was confirmed by the news from Vienna. Count Berchtold had paid no attention to the representations of Sir Maurice de Bunsen.† Likewise he contested the statement of the Russian ambassador that "doubtless some way would be found to satisfy both parties, Austria and Serbia," and said that any Austro-Hungarian Government would be "simply swept away" if it proposed further discussion with Serbia.‡ The German Government, in rejecting the British proposal for a conference, had staked everything on an exchange of views between Vienna and St. Petersburg. Now, there was no prospect of this.

Nor was this the only difficulty. Two days before, urgent instructions had been sent to Herr von Tschirschky to secure from the Cabinet of Vienna a recognition of Italy's claim to compensation.§ The ambassador, who "used the most peremptory language possible," finally persuaded Counts Berchtold and Forgách to take the initiative for a conversation with Italy,‖ and they did so. On 28 July instructions were sent to Rome with a view to satisfying the Italian demands.¶

They read:

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* Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R, 1925 90.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 346.

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 356. Schebeko, though very conciliatory in his manner, "was apparently more or less excited beneath the surface, as he was as white as chalk."

§ See above, p. 65.

‖ Tschirschky to Jagow, private, 28 July; G 326. Tschirschky's energy in this matter was in striking contrast with the manner in which he executed his instructions about concessions to Serbia or Russia.

¶ They were sent in spite of a new protest from Mérey, whose view had hitherto prevailed with Berchtold. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; A II 86.

> As has already been stated to the Italian ambassador here, we have absolutely no intention of acquiring any territory. But should we find ourselves, contrary to our expectations, forced to undertake an occupation of Serbian territory which could not be regarded as temporary, we shall be ready in that event to enter upon an exchange of view with Italy about compensation.*

The German chancellor found this attitude "absolutely unsatisfactory." Not only was Vienna, by its reservations, "threatening to split the Triple Alliance on the eve of a possible European conflagration," but it was guilty of a double-faced policy:

> Its declaration that in case of the permanent occupation of parts of Serbian territory, it will come to an arrangement with Italy, is, moreover, in direct opposition to the assurances of territorial disinterestedness given at St. Petersburg.†

As the one German argument to Russia for localizing the war had been the territorial disinterestedness of Austria, Herr von Bethmann felt that his whole position had been cut from under his feet: "I am not willing," he said, "to run the risk of being accused of double-dealing." As a matter of fact, he could be accused of just that, because on the previous evening he had learned that the members of the Austro-Hungarian embassy in London were admitting that "Austria was concerned solely with the destruction of Serbia" and saying that "it was the intention to make a present of portions of Serbia to Bulgaria (and presumably also to Albania)."* Yet he had advised the Cabinet of Vienna to repeat its declaration of disinterestedness in St. Petersburg and had asked the Russian Government to accept the explanations of Vienna as satisfactory.† Poor Bethmann! He was certainly in a deep hole. He had agreed to the partition of Serbia on 5 July, had not taken advantage of Count Berchtold's pretended repudiation to secure a definite statement of the Austrian plans, and had allowed Herr von Jagow to inquire what the Austrian territorial intentions were. He had only himself to blame for his predicament. Still, that did not help him to solve his problem. By the afternoon of 29 July he had nothing on which to build, neither the territorial disinterestedness of Austria-Hungary nor the hope of direct negotiations between Vienna and St. Petersburg; and he knew that the Russian partial mobilization would give the German military authorities a powerful argument for demanding counter-measures.

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* Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 28 July; A II 87. A copy was sent to Szögyény for communication to Jagow, and it was read to Tschirschky, who at once telegraphed the paragraph quoted in the text. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 328. Berchtold, in a secret annex, explained that he had made the concession "because at the moment a great game is being played which cannot be put through in the face of the formidable difficulties unless the Triple Alliance holds firmly together"; but he also made clear to Berlin that he would not consider "giving up any part of the Monarchy" as compensation, that is, Trentino—which, in Berlin's opinion, was the only concession that would satisfy Italy.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Jagow, 29 July; G 340. Sazonov's suspicions seem to have been entirely warranted. In the course of his arguments at the Ballplatz, Tschirschky told Macchio that "San Giuliano was not to be blamed for being dissatisfied with the Austrian declaration that no acquisition of territory was being intended, as this declaration had not been made in any binding form." Tschirschky to Jagow, private, 26 July; G 326.

His desperation is revealed by his sending for the British ambassador and telling him, in somewhat general terms, of the *démarche* undertaken at Vienna the night before.‡ From the fact that he had gone so far in giving advice at Vienna, he hoped, he said, that Sir Edward Grey would realize that "he was sincerely doing all in his power to prevent danger of European complications." But, Sir Edward Goschen had to add, in informing his chief:

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 301.

† See above, pp. 127–129.

‡ Bethmann said he had informed Vienna that "he quite understood that Austro-Hungarian Government could not rest satisfied without some sure guarantees that demands they had made upon Servia would be scrupulously carried out in their entirety . . . he presumed that hostilities about to be undertaken against Servia had exclusive object of securing such guarantees particularly as Austro-Hungarian Government had already given assurances at St. Petersburg that she had no territorial designs. If this view was correct he advised Austro-Hungarian Government to speak openly in that sense, for he hoped that by holding such language all possible misunderstanding might be set aside." From the chancellor's statement it was not made clear that he had proposed that Austria-Hungary should content herself with a temporary occupation of Belgrade and certain other places as a means of executing her original demands.

> His Excellency begged me most urgently to request you to regard this communication of language he had held in Vienna as most secret and confidential and not to mention it to representatives of any other Power. He had not even mentioned it to Prince Lichnowsky. That he communicated it to me was a proof of confidence he felt in you and of his desire that you should know how sincerely he appreciated your efforts in the cause of general peace and that he was doing his best to support them.*

What was the purpose of this manœuvre? The German chancellor knew that for days M. Sazonov had been begging for his mediation at Vienna; a new appeal had been received that very morning. He had actually taken steps in that direction, steps which he was representing as quite serious. Yet he would not allow Russia, or any other Power, to be informed of them. Apparently he had not yet learned of the Russian partial mobilization.† One can only conclude that Herr von Bethmann regarded war as unavoidable and was trying to secure British neutrality by representing the conduct of Germany in the best possible light. According to Admiral von Tirpitz, and we may well believe it, the chancellor "had collapsed completely."‡

THE CONSULTATIONS AT POTSDAM

The situation was now so serious that in the latter part of the day the principal authorities of the Empire repaired to

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* Goschen to Grey, telegram, "urgent, secret and confidential," 29 July, 4.27 P. M.; B 264. The conversation evidently took place in the early afternoon, when the chancellor was beginning to appreciate the difficulties of his position. There seems to be a tone of scepticism in Grey's reply, as if he penetrated Bethmann's manœuvre. "You should thank German Chancellor for his confidence which I much appreciate and will respect as he desires. If he can succeed in getting Austria to give assurances that will satisfy Russia, and to abstain from going so far as to come into collision with Russia we shall all join in gratitude for the preservation of the peace of Europe. He may rely upon His Majesty's Government continuing to take every opportunity of working for peace." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 29 July; B 266. Communicated to Bethmann by Goschen the same evening; G 353.

† He did not mention it in the conversation. Pourtalès' telegram announcing it was received at 2.52 P. M. (G 343); Goschen's was sent at 4.27 P. M. If allowance is made for the time required for decodification and codification of the two messages, it seems most unlikely that Bethmann could have heard the news at the time he was speaking to Goschen. The Wolff Bureau published the news at 5.30 P. M.

‡ Tirpitz, *Erinnerungen*, p. 237.

Potsdam for consultation with the Emperor.* No detailed record is available of the discussions, but apparently the news that Russia intended to order partial mobilization was not taken into consideration.† At the meeting of the Prussian council of ministers on the following day, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said:

> His Majesty had agreed that before any further decisions were arrived at, the *démarche* at Vienna should be brought to a conclusion. . . . The military authorities had expressed the desire that 'threatening danger of war' [*drohende Kriegsgefahr*] should be proclaimed, but he had successfully maintained his objections [they had to do with the diplomatic situation] before His Majesty, and the measures taken had been limited to the military protection of the railways.‡

Although he did not mention the meeting at Potsdam, that was the only occasion when, so far as is known, the chancellor, the military authorities and the Emperor had consulted together, so that Bethmann's remarks may be taken to refer to that meeting. General von Falkenhayn's biographer states that the minister of war once more urged the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' but that the Emperor, although he thought that "the ball was rolling and could not be stopped," refused, "in the interest of maintaining peace."* As Moltke agreed, Falkenhayn did not press his demand, on the ground that the war office could not oppose the general staff.† On the other hand, the Bavarian military attaché was told the next morning that it had been agreed that "the German military measures must be gradually extended to the state of 'threatening danger of war.' "‡ Although we have no further record of the discussions,§ the deliberations were followed by certain steps in the development of German policy, steps occasioned by three new factors which profoundly affected the situation from a military point of view.

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* According to the Bavarian military attaché, "the chancellor, Moltke and Falkenhayn were summoned to the Emperor at Potsdam at 6 P. M." Wenninger to war office, report no. 2, 30 July; Dirr, p. 225. About 10.30 P. M., that very day, Bethmann told the British ambassador that "he had just come from a Council at Potsdam, at which the Emperor, Admiral v. Tirpitz and the Minister of War had been present." Goschen to Nicolson, private, [30] July; B 677. It is not surprising, therefore, that the gathering has been described as a "crown council"; Oman, p. 73. According, however, to the journal of the military aide on duty that day, there was no formal assembly, but the Emperor—just as on 5 July and 6 July—received individuals: at 4.40 P. M., the chancellor, the minister of war, the chief of the general staff and the chief of the military cabinet (Lyncker); at 6.10 his brother Prince Henry; and at 7.15 the secretary of the navy, the chief of the naval staff (Pohl) and the chief of the naval cabinet (Müller). A. von Wegerer, "Der angebliche Kronrat vom 29. Juli, 1914," in *KSF*, I, 8–12 (July, 1923). Zwehl, p. 56, says that Bethmann, Falkenhayn and Moltke were received together by the Emperor. Tirpitz, *Politische Dokumente*, II, 2–4, publishes a memorandum of his audience at 6 P. M., in which he does not mention the presence of other navy officials.

† It is not mentioned in any of the brief accounts available. Moreover, Bethmann informed the Emperor of the news early the next morning. Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 30 July, 6 A. M.; G 399. The Emperor's comments (see below, p. 192) show that he then heard the news for the first time.

‡ Protocol of the Prussian council of ministers, 30 July; G 456.

The first of these factors was the news of the intended Russian partial mobilization, already mentioned. The second was that Belgium was calling up the last three classes of reserves and arming her fortresses.‖ Lastly, the naval attaché in London reported that the British First Fleet had put to sea, that the Second and Third Fleets were being kept in port, and that flotillas were concentrating at Dover and in the Humber.¶ In the course of the evening, steps were taken with reference to each of these new circumstances.

First of all, the Emperor replied to the telegram which he had received from the Tsar that morning.** He could not, he said "consider Austria's action against Serbia an 'ignoble' war," because Austria had "to get full guarantee that the Serbian promises shall become real facts" and had stated that she did "not want to make any territorial conquests at the expense of Serbia." Since the German Government was continuing its exertions to promote a direct understanding between Vienna and St. Petersburg, he asked Russia not to take any military measures that "would be looked on by Austria as threatening" and that "would precipitate a calamity which we both wish to avoid."* The telegram, on its face, was so conciliatory that it caused the Tsar to countermand the order for general mobilization. Nevertheless, about the time of sending it, William told Admiral von Tirpitz that "he did not know what the Austrians wanted" and that Herr von Tschirschky had had to be instructed to find out "what they really did want"!†

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* Tirpitz, II, 2–4, represents the Emperor as explaining the situation but not proposing any action; it is not certain, however, that Tirpitz was present with the military authorities. A few indications of the Emperor's state of mind on this day are provided by his comments on the telegrams submitted to him. He was incensed because the Tsar exhibited no feeling of monarchical solidarity (G 332), and doubted whether an understanding could be reached between Vienna and St. Petersburg. He considered war inevitable because Russia "was determined to protect Serbia against Austria" (G 344). He confessed that, after having read the Serbian reply, he was "worried" by the responsibility which Austria had assumed in rejecting it, but repudiated in advance the efforts of Russia to saddle him with the responsibility for Austria's action (G 337). Altogether his remarks create the impression that he was quite as rattled as his much-harassed chancellor.

† Zwehl, p. 56.

‡ Wenninger to war office, report no. 3, 30 July; Dirr, p. 225.

§ On the following day the French ambassador heard conflicting stories. One was that "the extraordinary council held at Potsdam yesterday evening with the military authorities under the presidency of the Emperor decided on mobilization." J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; F 105. The other was that "nothing had been decided definitely." J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Bourgeois and Pagès, p. 43.

‖ General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372.

¶ Groos, p. 17.

** G 332; see above, p. 98.

Even more remarkable is it that the Emperor was allowed—the telegram was drafted by Herr von Jagow—to repeat to the Tsar the assurance of Austrian territorial disinterestedness. Not only was this disinterestedness not believed in by the chancellor,‡ but he communicated his suspicions to Herr von Tschirschky. After repeating in more diplomatic language the opinion which he had expressed on Prince Lichnowsky's report that the members of the Austrian embassy in London were talking openly of the partition of Serbia, Herr von Bethmann said:

> I must draw from these contradictions the conclusion that the disavowal of Count Hoyos§ . . . was only a play to the gallery, and that the Vienna Government is entertaining plans which it finds advisable to keep secret from us, in order to assure itself of German support in all circumstances and not expose itself to a possible refusal of that support if their plans became known.||

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* William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 29 July, 6.30 P. M.; G 359.

† Tirpitz, II, 4.

‡ See above, p. 125.

§ See above, I, 343.

|| Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 29 July, 8 P. M.; G 361. As Lichnowsky had requested Bethmann to "make no references to these expressions at Vienna" (in order not to compromise his relations with Mensdorff), Tschirschky

None the less the German Government sponsored to Russia, through the Emperor, an Austro-Hungarian declaration in which it had no confidence, and from this time forward asked not only Russia but the Powers to accept this declaration in good faith.

Later in the evening, Bethmann-Hollweg, Jagow, Moltke, and Falkenhayn met to discuss the situation created by the Russian partial mobilization.* Should Germany mobilize? Did not the Conrad-Moltke correspondence of 1909 impose this step on Germany? "As soon as Russia mobilizes," Moltke had promised, "Germany will mobilize, and will mobilize her entire army." Moreover, the appeal received that day from Conrad amounted, in face of the Russian action, to a demand for mobilization, and an early answer had been promised.† Germany's duty and interest would seem to be clear.

As so often, Falkenhayn is our only witness for the military decision, and an invaluable one. He declined to press for mobilization, "so long as no important military interest was at stake":

> This, however, is not the case [he wrote in his diary], for it can be assumed that our mobilization, even if it follows two or three days later than the Russian and the Austrian, will still be completed more quickly than theirs. If we were to take any decisive action, we should have instituted 'threatening danger of war' early to-day, as I proposed.

Military interests, then, did not make German mobilization imperative. And political considerations made it unwise:

> [The question of German mobilization] was answered in the negative by the chancellor, in the face of the weak, *very* weak opposition of Moltke, because he [Bethmann] is of the opinion

was told that the remarks were for his "personal information." Berchtold was only to be reminded that "it would be advisable to avoid any suspicions as to the declaration made to the Powers concerning the integrity of Serbia."

* Zwehl, p. 57. This was doubtless the "council of ministers" which the Russian ambassador heard had been called for the evening. Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R, 1925 90.

† Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 3.

> that, since according to a statement of Sazonov to Pourtalès the Russian mobilization does not yet mean war, the *casus foederis* is not yet involved. But we must wait for the arrival of this contingency because otherwise we shall have public opinion with us neither at home nor in England. The latter [Falkenhayn means the support of English opinion] is desirable because England cannot stand on the side of Russia if the latter lets loose the fury of war by an attack on Austria and thereby assumed the responsibility for the great smash [*Kladderadatsch*].*

In other words, the chief of staff, although he seems to have desired counter-measures,† knowing that the chancellor had the support of the Emperor, declined to press a point which he perceived he could not carry, and which was not absolutely necessary from a military point of view.

The only difference between the chief of staff and the chancellor was the question of tactics. Moltke believed war unavoidable, now that Russia had begun to mobilize, and wished to take such military measures as the situation required. Bethmann also thought war inevitable, as will be seen presently, but wished to postpone military measures until he had learned the result of his *démarche* in Vienna and of an overture which he had just made to London.‡ For the moment he had his way. The only new measures authorized that evening were the guarding of the railways by the military (instead of by the police), the recall of men on leave, and the construction of emplacements in the fortresses along the frontiers,* which had already been ordered in Russia and France.

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* Zwehl, p. 57.

† At 11.50 P. M., the Bavarian minister telegraphed to Munich: "Situation very tense this evening as result of Russian and French preparations for war. German great general staff is for counter-measures to correspond, but no decision has as yet been made." Lerchenfeld to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; Dirr, p. 156. It may be noted that Falkenhayn does not state that Moltke opposed measures less far-reaching than mobilization.

‡ General von Kluck, who commanded the right wing of the German army in the march on Paris, remarks, "Had the German army been mobilized and deployed three days earlier, a more sweeping victory and decisive result would probably have been gained," and refers to "the postponement of the mobilization of the armies for three days for political reasons." A. von Kluck, *The March on Paris* (London, 1920), pp. 33, 77. As the German army was mobilized on 1 August, three days earlier would have been 29 July. Whatever the exact meaning of Kluck's language may be, his statement implies that the question of mobilization was discussed on 29 July.

But if it was safe to await developments in the East, the news from Belgium was quite disturbing. The problem of Belgium was both military and political. The Treaty of 1839 bound Germany to respect the neutrality of her small neighbor. But in order to have an easy road into France, the German Government had long ago decided, in the event of war, to violate that neutrality. The military advantage thus hoped for was, however, offset by a political handicap: the German action would arouse the opposition, if not the open hostility, of Great Britain. It would, therefore, be a matter of supreme political importance for the German Government to explain away its action and persuade or induce Great Britain to remain neutral, and the moment the march through Belgium became imminent, German diplomacy must set to work.

From a military point of view, the march through Belgium offered a very pretty problem. A glance at a map will show that between the Maestricht region of southeastern Holland, whose neutrality Germany proposed to respect,† and the forest of the Ardennes, which is not traversed by railways running to the westward, the distance is only some fifteen miles, and that the only important line of communication westwards is the main railway line controlled by the forts surrounding the city of Liège. Through this bottle-neck there had to pass, according to the plan of campaign now in force (the only plan available at the moment), some half a million men of the right wing of the German armies. General von Moltke was not without hope that the Belgian Government would not offer resistance to the German armies, but this was not assured, and no chances could be taken. If the Belgians did resist with energy, the entire German plan would be thrown out of gear, and the prospect of successful resistance would be greatly increased if the Belgian army was given time to organize the incomplete defenses of the Liège forts.

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* *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, 10.

† In an earlier plan the German right flank was to cross southern Holland. Moltke abandoned this in order to avoid adding the Dutch army to the enemy forces, to keep the Scheldt closed and thereby prevent the easy relief of Antwerp, and to have the use of neutral Dutch ports for trading purposes in case Great Britain entered the war and succeeded in blockading Germany.

So in order not to allow the Belgians the opportunity to organize field works and to reinforce the garrison of the fortress, General von Moltke had worked out some years before, with the assistance of Colonel Ludendorff, a scheme for the immediate seizure of Liège as soon as hostilities broke out. Instead of withholding his advance until the German armies had completed their concentration, he proposed to throw forward troops specially trained for the task, with the mission of rushing the numerous forts surrounding the city, which were detached from each other and without adequate facilities for communication or command. This daring conception depended for its successful execution on the German troops covering the twenty miles between the frontier and Liège before the garrison of Liège was ready to defend the fortress.*

How deeply this factor entered into the calculations of General von Moltke is revealed by his own statement:

> The *coup de main* at Liège was a daring undertaking. If it failed, the reaction on our morale would be serious.†

It is also highly significant that when on 26 July he drafted, with his own hand, an ultimatum for presentation to the Belgian Government at the proper moment,‡ he particularized the action which he wished Belgium to avoid: "Resistance of the forts of the Meuse or the destruction of railways, roads, tunnels or other works"§—that is, anything which would delay the advance of his armies. Such acts, he declared, Germany would regard as a *casus belli.*

By 4 P. M. on 29 July the German general staff had received

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*Moltke, pp. 17–18; *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 71; Kuhl, *Der deutsche Generalstab in Vorbereitung und Durchführung des Weltkrieges*, p. 182; T. H. Thomas, "Holland and Belgium in the German War Plan," in *Foreign Affairs* (New York), VI, 315–328 (January, 1928); J. H. Bredt, *Die belgische Neutralität und der Schlieffensche Feldzugsplan* (Berlin, 1929), pp. 39–46, with quotations from unpublished military documents.

† Moltke, p. 18.

‡ See above, pp. 59–60.

§ G 376, paragraph 8.

the following information concerning the military preparations of Belgium:

> Army will be brought from 55,000 to 100,000 men by calling up of three classes. The calling up of these reservists has been ordered. Frontier service is to be strengthened. Belgium will resist an invasion of the French as well as of the Germans; appropriate measures; forts being armed. Preparations for exploding works, etc.*

The whole strategic plan might be upset unless the German army got possession of Liège before the fortresses could be organized for serious resistance and before the Belgians could prepare a systematic destruction of railway tunnels and bridges.

This news of the Belgian preparations would make a decision about peace or war urgent from a military point of view, and in the course of the evening two steps were taken which indicate very fairly the reaction of Berlin to the information from Brussels.

(1) The ultimatum which Moltke had drafted three days before was sent by special messenger to the German minister in Brussels, in a sealed envelope which he was to keep safely locked up and not to open until instructed by telegraph to do so.† This memorable document began thus:

> The Imperial Government is in receipt of reliable information to the effect that French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This information leaves no doubt as to the intention of France [after junction with an English expeditionary force]‡ to advance against Germany through Belgian territory.§
>
> The Imperial Government cannot relieve itself of the fear that Belgium, in spite of the utmost good will, will be unable, without assistance, to repel so considerable a French[-English]

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* General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372.

† Jagow to Below-Saleske, 29 July; G 375. The hour of despatch is given as "29 [July], evening." It is placed between a telegram sent at 9.45 P. M. (G 371) and a telegram received at 10.14 P. M. (G 376A).

‡ The passages in brackets were eliminated from Moltke's original draft by the foreign office, because of the appeal about to be made for the neutrality of Great Britain.

§ On this point, see above, pp. 59-60.

> invasion with sufficient prospect of success to afford an adequate guarantee against danger to Germany. It is essential, for the self-preservation of Germany, to anticipate such a hostile attack. The German Government would, however, feel the deepest regret if Belgium regarded as an act of hostility against herself the fact that the measures of Germany's opponents force her, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory.

The German Government then made the following declaration, "in order to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding":

> 1. Germany contemplates no act of hostility against Belgium. If Belgium is disposed, in the coming war, to adopt an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards Germany [instead of: "to take the side of Germany"], the German Government pledges itself, at the conclusion of peace, not only to guarantee the integrity and independence of the kingdom in their full extent, but it will even be prepared to support in the most benevolent manner any claims of the Kingdom for territorial compensation at the expense of France.*
>
> 2. Germany binds herself, under the conditions stated above, to evacuate the territory of the Kingdom as soon as peace has been concluded.
>
> 3. In case Belgium maintains a friendly [instead of "benevolently neutral"] attitude, Germany will be ready, under an arrangement with the Royal Belgian authorities, to pay cash for all the necessities of her troops and to make good all damage that may be caused by German troops.

There then followed a pointed threat:

> Should Belgium oppose the German troops, and in particular throw obstacles in their way of march by a resistance of the forts on the Meuse or by destroying railways, roads, tunnels or other similar works, Germany will, to her regret, be compelled to treat Belgium as an enemy. In this event, Germany can undertake no obligations towards the Kingdom, but would have to leave the future adjustment of the relations between the two states to the decision of arms.

But expression was given to "the distinct hope" that "this eventuality will not occur"; and if it did not, then "the friendly ties which bind the two neighboring states will grow stronger and more enduring." A reply was to be given within twenty-four hours.* The despatch of this drastic and detailed document to be held ready at the legation in Brussels shows how imminent a general European war now appeared to the German Government.

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* The words "at the expense of France" were added by the foreign office.

(2) Next, the German chancellor made a formal overture for the neutrality of Great Britain,† the effect of which was to convince the British Government that Germany was bent on war and to destroy all confidence in Herr von Bethmann's professions of a desire for peace. At 10.30 P. M. the chancellor sent for the British ambassador and read to him a statement from typewritten notes‡ which was, as Sir Edward Goschen said, a "strong bid for British neutrality." The ambassador drafted a telegram on the spot, made a few alterations at the request of the chancellor, and sent it to Sir Edward Grey.

> He [Bethmann] said he was continuing his efforts to maintain peace, but that (? in the event of) a Russian attack on Austria, Germany's obligation as Austria's ally might, to his great regret, render a European conflagration inevitable, and in that case he hoped Great Britain would remain neutral. As far as he was able to judge key-note of British policy, it was evident that Great Britain would never allow France to be crushed. Such a result was not contemplated by Germany. The Imperial Government was ready to give every assurance to the British Government provided Great Britain remained neutral that, in the event of a victorious war, Germany aimed at no territorial acquisitions at the expense of France.
>
> In answer to a question from me, his Excellency said that it would not be possible for him to give such an assurance as regards colonies.
>
> Continuing, his Excellency said he was, further, ready to assure the British Government that Germany would respect

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* Jagow to Below-Saleske, 29 July; G 376.

† Moltke did not believe, as did the foreign office, that Great Britain would make any such declaration, so he told Conrad in May, 1914; Conrad, III, 670. The opinion of the German staff was that Great Britain would probably come into the war, but not at the beginning.

‡ G 373.

neutrality and integrity of Holland as long as they were respected by Germany's adversaries.

As regards Belgium, his Excellency could not tell to what operations Germany might be forced by the action of France,* but he could state that provided that Belgium did not take sides against Germany, her integrity would be respected after the conclusion of the war.

Finally, his Excellency said that he trusted that these assurances might form basis of further understanding with England which, as you well know, had been the object of his policy since he had been chancellor.

An assurance of British neutrality in conflict which present crisis might possibly produce would enable him to look forward to a general neutrality agreement between the two countries, the details of which it would, of course, be premature to discuss at the present moment.

His Excellency asked me how I thought you would view his request. I replied that I thought you would like to retain full liberty of action, and that personally I did not consider it likely that you would care to bind yourself to any course of action at this stage of events.†

Such was the proposal which the British prime minister was a few days later to describe as "infamous." It has been argued that the German overture was made in the interest of peace: the neutrality of Great Britain would cause Russia and France to abstain from war.‡ But apart from the fact that the reports from St. Petersburg and Paris contained no intimations that

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* Bethmann knew well enough that the plans of the German general staff called for the violation of Belgian neutrality. In the memorandum of December, 1912, which was drawn up by Moltke and sent to the government, it was stated that the offensive must be taken on the French front. "But if we are to take the offensive against France, it would be necessary to violate the neutrality of Belgium. It is only by an advance across Belgium that we can hope to attack and defeat the French army in the open field." Ludendorff, *Urkunden der Obersten Heeresleitung*, pp. 54–55. "I was informed of the plan of concentration for a war on two fronts long before the war." Bethmann-Hollweg to Reichsarchiv, 27 May, 1920; Bredt, p. 55.

† Goschen to Grey, telegram, "secret and urgent," 29 July; B 293. Cf. Goschen to Nicolson, private, [30] July; B 677.

‡ "The chancellor believed . . . that neither Russia nor France would push matters to war if they did not think that they could count on England's support. *The neutrality of England would thus have insured the maintenance of peace.* The chancellor wished to make the attempt to this end. The question of the French colonies, raised by Sir E. Goschen and answered by Bethmann 'off the bat' [*aus*

Russian and French policy was determined by calculations of British support,* the argument is hardly consistent with Herr von Bethmann's own actions. During the afternoon, he had proposed to offer Great Britain a 'fleet agreement,' that is, a limitation of naval armaments which would insure the supremacy of the British navy, to which the Emperor refused his consent.† It is certainly hard to believe that he would have suggested such a thing unless he regarded the situation as desperate and the neutrality of Great Britain worth buying at any price. Moreover, his statement to Sir Edward Goschen was formulated on the definite hypothesis of war with Russia and France; there is not a word in it suggesting that Great Britain might prevent the war by restraining Russia and France.

A more reasonable explanation of his action is that when he heard of the Russian partial mobilization, he considered war unavoidable and wished to learn how soon he could yield to the demands of the soldiers for counter-measures on the part of Germany. If there were any prospect of British neutrality—and the sailing of the British fleet introduced an unknown factor—he would resist the soldiers until he had secured Count Berchtold's acceptance of the *'Halt in Belgrad,'* which would enable him to saddle Russia with the responsibility for the war; if England was not going to remain neutral, then Germany was free to act as the military situation required. It is surely significant that on this same evening instructions which had

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dem Stegreif] in the negative and perhaps not altogether happily, would not in any way have been decisive for us, but it would above all have been without purpose if peace had been maintained." G. von Jagow, *England und der Kriegsausbruch* (Berlin, 1925), pp. 33–34.

* On the contrary, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Paris reported his British colleague as saying: "Active interference by Russia would bring about participation by Germany and France. England would look on, but, if France were threatened with *destruction*, would have to join in." Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 329. Cf. Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; A II 83; also Bertie, I, 3. Bethmann's assurance to Goschen that Germany would respect the integrity of French territory in Europe was in strict keeping with this hint.

† Tirpitz, II, 3. The Emperor told Tirpitz that "he could not justify such a thing to the people." At this time William was apparently relying on what King George had said to Prince Henry: "We shall try all we can to keep out of this and shall remain neutral" (Prince Henry to William II, 28 July; G 374). "I have the word of a king," he remarked to Tirpitz; "that is enough for me."

been drafted on 27 July were sent to the German minister in Copenhagen to govern his speech in the event of war:

> In the event of a European conflagration we have absolutely no intention of threatening the existence of the Danish state. But the circumstances of the war might, without our desire or consent, lead to the extension of operations to Danish waters. Denmark must realize the seriousness of the situation, and make up her mind what attitude she will assume in such an event.*

Shortly after the German chancellor had made his overture, he received staggering news from London.

London and Berlin, 29 July

On the morning of 29 July the situation presented itself to the British foreign office in the following light. M. Sazonov had declared, *à propos* of Austro-Hungarian assurances with regard to Serbia's independence and integrity, that

> no engagement that Austria might take on these two points would satisfy Russia, and that on day Austria crossed Servian frontier order for mobilization against Austria would be issued.†

As Austria-Hungary had already declared war and Count Berchtold had refused to enter into direct negotiations with Russia, it was evident, as the Russian ambassador in Vienna said, that "the least thing might precipitate conflict," especially if the Russian minister of war was "bellicose and Emperor of Russia already very angry."‡ To offset this ominous news was the assurance by the German chancellor of "his desire to co-operate with England and his intention to do his utmost to maintain general peace."* But what chance was there of "general peace" if Austria attacked Serbia? And Herr von Bethmann had said nothing on the latter point. The inmost thoughts of both Sir Arthur Nicolson and Sir Eyre Crowe can be seen in their agreement that "we should not, in present circumstances, issue the otherwise usual declaration of neutrality" between Austria and Serbia.†

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* Jagow to Brockdorff-Rantzau, telegram, 29 July, 9.45 P. M.; G 371. The Emperor approved the instruction on 27 July, but did not then "consider its despatch to be urgent."

† Buchanan to Grey, telegram (no. 177), 28 July; B 247. A later telegram (no. 180) of the same day (B 235) stated that the foreign press correspondents had been informed of the decision about mobilization.

‡ Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 248.

During the morning Sir Edward Grey saw Prince Lichnowsky. He told the ambassador that Austria refused to converse with Russia and that the Russian foreign office had informed the press that "Russia would see herself compelled to regard the entry of Austrian troops on Serbian soil as a *casus belli*."‡ Since Germany had declined a conference, but had accepted the idea of mediation *à quatre,* Sir Edward said that "he would be happy if we were in a position to make any kind of a proposal."§ Indeed, he even threw out a suggestion of the line he thought the German Government might take: he communicated San Giuliano's hint that Serbia might yield to the advice of Europe if Points 5 and 6 of the Austrian note were fully explained.* He himself could not propose this because Austria-Hungary had refused to accept discussion on the basis of the Serbian reply,† but he had asked the Italian foreign minister, so he gave Lichnowsky to understand, to take the matter up in Berlin and Vienna.‡ Grey, the ambassador reported, "considers the situation to be extremely serious":

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* Goschen to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 249. Bethmann also said that "he was doing his very best both at Vienna and St. Petersburg to get the two Governments to discuss the situation directly with each other and in a friendly way"; but this was, of course, out of date, now that Berchtold had declined a discussion. Crowe minuted: "It is difficult to believe that the German Government have done anything at all"; Nicolson added: "There have certainly been no indications that Germany has exercised any moderating influence at Vienna."

† Minutes on B 250.

‡ This is Lichnowsky's version, which of course guided the German Government, but it is not quite accurate. Lichnowsky said that Grey read him a telegram from Buchanan, which is clearly Buchanan's no. 180 of 28 July (B 235). Buchanan stated that "on the first move of Austria against Servia Russia would mobilize." According to Grey's version (Grey to Goschen, telegram, 29 July; B 263), he stated that "the press correspondents at St. Petersburg had been told that Russian Government would mobilize."

§ Grey, it will be recalled, had said on the previous day that he would not put the matter of mediation up to Germany, as suggested by Goschen, "till we see how the conversations between Austria and Russia progress." As they had failed, Grey was now free to act. His own statement is much clearer than that of Lichnowsky. "The German Government had said that they were favourable in principle to mediation between Russia and Austria if necessary. They seemed to think the particular method of conference, consultation or discussion, or even conversations *à quatre* in London too formal a method. I urged that the German Government should suggest any method by which the influence of the four Powers could be used together to prevent war between Austria and Russia. France agreed, Italy agreed. The whole idea of mediation or mediating influence was ready to be put into operation by any method that Germany could suggest if mine was not acceptable. In fact, mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would 'press the button' in the interests of peace." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 29 July; B 263.

> I gathered again from the minister's expressions to-day that they are firmly convinced here, as I have repeatedly had the honor to inform your Excellency, that unless Austria is willing to enter upon a discussion of the Serbian question, a world war is unavoidable.§

This telegram reached Berlin at 5.07 P. M., that is, when the discussions at Potsdam were in full swing.

Shortly after this conversation Count Benckendorff informed the foreign office that "in consequence of the declaration of war by Austria on Serbia," the Russian Government had decided to mobilize the four southern districts, and that "mediation by the Cabinet of London with a view to stopping Austrian military operations against Serbia was a matter of extreme urgency":|| Russia had not waited till Austrian troops had entered Serbia. There also arrived an important telegram from Rome, according to which the Italian foreign minister had said that

> there seemed to be a difficulty in making Germany believe that Russia was in earnest and thought that it would have a great effect if she believed that Great Britain would act with Russia and France, as Germany was really desirous of good relations with ourselves.¶

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* Rodd to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 231.

† Grey to Goschen, 29 July; B 284. Hence the matter was not referred to in the telegram to Goschen.

‡ Cf. Grey to Rodd, telegram, 29 July; B 246.

§ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 357.

|| Benckendorff to Nicolson, 29 July, communicating Sazonov's telegrams of 28 July; B 258.

¶ Rodd to Grey, telegram, 29 July, received 11.40 A. M.; B 252.

The position was obviously growing more acute.* So Sir Edward Grey sent for Prince Lichnowsky, and if his remarks at their morning meeting may be interpreted as an effort to 'smoke out' the German Government, what he said in the afternoon conversation was clearly an attempt to make Berlin see the seriousness of the situation.†

After telling the ambassador of the Russian decision and the Russian request for mediation, the British foreign secretary repeated his suggestion that Germany participate in mediation *à quatre:*

> It seemed to him personally a suitable basis for mediation that Austria, perhaps after occupying Belgrade and other places, should announce her conditions. Of course it would suit him equally well if your Excellency were to undertake mediation. . . . But mediation seemed to him now urgently necessary if a European catastrophe were not to result.

This was very similar to the *'Halt in Belgrad'* which the German chancellor had recommended to Vienna, although at the moment London was not yet aware of this *démarche*.*

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* Early in the afternoon Count Mensdorff called to present the Austrian *dossier* (a printed document of 57 pages, in *German*, which Sir Edward Grey could not read), which, he said, "gave an account of the conduct of Servia toward Austria, and an explanation of how necessary the Austrian action was." Grey said he "did not wish to discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Servia." The news seemed to him "very bad for the peace of Europe," and "the Powers were not allowed to help in getting satisfaction for Austria, which they might get if they were given an opportunity." When Mensdorff tried to argue that after the declaration of war and the opening of hostilities it might be "too late," Grey exclaimed, "Then it is perhaps also too late to save the peace of Europe." The ambassador then adverted to the promise of territorial disinterestedness, but the foreign secretary replied that "it would be quite possible, without nominally interfering with the independence of Servia or taking away any of her territory, to turn her into a sort of vassal state." Mensdorff "deprecated" this, but asserted that "according to our previous agreements with Russia . . . Serbia belonged in our sphere of influence." After seeing Tyrrell, Mensdorff summarized the British position thus: "If possible in any way, to keep out of all European complications; Russian interests leave England cold; but if it is a question of the vital interest of France or her position as a Great Power, no British Government will be in a position to prevent England participating on the side of France." Grey to Bunsen, 29 July; B 285. Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 14.

† On the telegram from Rome (B 252) Nicolson minuted: "To my mind the only possible way of avoiding a conflict is to ask Austria to take no military action pending conversation, and it is quite clear that such a request would be peremptorily rejected and would not be supported by Germany. I am of opinion that the resources of diplomacy are, for the present, exhausted. . . . Appeals either to Austria or Russia to alter their course would be futile and would lead to misunderstandings." Grey evidently was unwilling to follow this counsel of despair.

Sir Edward Grey then proceeded to give his interlocutor a warning:

> He had a friendly and private communication to make to me, namely, that he did not wish our cordial personal relations and the intimacy of our exchange of views on all political questions to mislead me and he would like to spare himself later from the reproach of insincerity. Now as before the British Government desired to cultivate the traditional friendship with us, and it could stand aside as long as the conflict was restricted to Austria and Russia. But if we and France were drawn in, the situation would change immediately, and in certain circumstances the British Government would see itself compelled to make decisions promptly. In that event it would not be practicable to stand aside for any length of time and wait. "If war breaks out, it will be the greatest catastrophe that the world has ever seen." It was far from his wish to make any kind of threat; he only wanted to save me from disappointment and himself from the charge of insincerity, and therefore he had chosen the form of a private statement.
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> Sir E. Grey added that the Government must also reckon with public opinion. Up to the present this had in general been in favor of Austria, as the justice of a certain satisfaction for her was recognized; but as a result of the Austrian stubbornness, it was now beginning to change over completely.†

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* Grey had expressed his belief to the Italian ambassador, so Lichnowsky added, that "if mediation were accepted, he would be able to secure every possible satisfaction for Austria; there would no longer be any question of a humiliating retreat for Austria, since the Serbs in any case would be punished and compelled, with Russia's consent, to subordinate themselves to Austria's wishes. Thus Austria could obtain guarantees for the future without a war which would endanger the peace of Europe."

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 368. Grey's version, which agrees closely with Lichnowsky's, is recorded in *despatches* to Goschen (B 285, 286) which, owing to the interruption of the courier service, were never sent to Berlin. For some reason no *telegram* was sent, and Goschen was mystified when Jagow referred to the matter. Goschen to Nicolson, private letter, 30 July; B 677. Ultimately, after Goschen had referred to the matter in a telegram (Goschen to Grey, 30 July; B 305) a brief telegram was sent to the effect that a warning had been given Lichnowsky that "Germany must not count on our standing aside in all circumstances." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 30 July, 10.30 P. M.; B 317. According to Grey's version of the conversation with Lichnowsky, "the German ambassador took no exception to what I had said; indeed he told me that it accorded with what he had already given in Berlin as his view of the situation"; which was quite true.

Prince Lichnowsky's telegram, which was received in Berlin at 9.12 P. M., produced a staggering effect.*

The effect would no doubt have been greater if the German Government had known that in the course of the afternoon a 'warning telegram,' in a form which "authorized everything short of full mobilization," was sent to the ships of the British navy throughout the world, and that all officers and men on leave were recalled;† and that "precautionary measures arranged by the General Staff to meet an immediate prospect of war" were ordered to be put in force by the British army.‡ The cabinet had not come to any decision, but the fighting departments were determined, like their *confrères* on the continent, that if and when a decision should be made, immediate advantage could be taken of it by the British armed forces.

BERLIN AND VIENNA, 29 JULY

The news from London, which almost certainly predicated British intervention in a general war, was not the only circumstance to discourage the German chancellor on the evening of 29 July. If his hopes for an Austro-Italian understanding had been diminished by the half-hearted promise of Count Berchtold to enter upon an exchange of views with Italy,§ they were further reduced by the blunt refusal of the Italian foreign minister "to deal with Baron von Mérey in the matter": "direct negotiations with Vienna," said San Giuliano, "would lead to a break."* The indirect news was equally bad. Sir William Tyrrell, "the most influential as well as the best informed person" in the British foreign office, had given Prince Lichnowsky to understand that "the Triple Alliance would not stand the test of a world war" and that "we should not let ourselves be deceived by official [*i. e.*, Austrian] statements to the contrary."†

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* The French ambassador in Berlin stated during the day that "England would doubtless place herself on the side of France and Russia at the first shot," and his Italian colleague expressed the same opinion; which caused pessimism in the foreign office. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 8. Cambon had said the same thing to Jagow three days before, to which the latter replied: "You have your information; we have ours, which is just the opposite. We are sure of the neutrality of England." Recouly, p. 23. Cambon's repetition of his opinion on 29 July was the result of receiving a telegram from his brother Paul Cambon, the ambassador in London, to the effect that "in consequence of the refusal of the Vienna cabinet to accept the more than conciliatory reply of Serbia to the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, France and Russia were assured of the actual support of England in the event of war." The Russian ambassador did not find this telegram so convincing as his French colleague, and consulted the British ambassador. Goschen replied that "he did not know the intentions of his Government," and evaded a satisfactory answer. Sverbeyev to Sazonov, final report, Schilling, p. 57.

† Corbett, I, 26. Cf. Churchill, I, 207–208; American edition, I, 220–221.

‡ J. E. Edmonds, *Military Operations, France and Belgium* (London, 1922), I, 24. "These affected the Regular troops only, and included the recall of officers and men on leave and furlough, and the manning of the coast defences."

§ See above, p. 141. Bethmann asked Tschirschky to point out to Berchtold that "the instructions sent to Baron von Mérey can scarcely satisfy Italy." Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 29 July; G 361.

"As goes Maine in September, so goes the United States in November," is a well-known belief of American politicians. Similarly it was a tradition of European diplomacy that Rumania followed the example of Italy, and this seemed likely to be the case. The Rumanian reaction to the proposal to take Bulgaria into the Triple Alliance‡ was chilling,§ and King Carol, communicating to the German Government the statement of M. Sazonov that Russia "could not tolerate an Austrian attack on Serbia," had said frankly that "in such an event Rumania would be under no further obligations."‖ Consequently the German Government maintained a studious silence toward the Cabinet of Bucharest. On 26 July, however, the

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* Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 363. San Giuliano justified his attitude by saying that "the Lovchen situation looked very black to him. The Austrian military party was absolutely determined to have the mountain, and would make use of every incident as an excuse to bring about the occupation of the place."

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 355. "I judge," said Lichnowsky, "that this view is based on the reports of Sir Rennell Rodd, and I did not get the impression that Sir W. Tyrrell had invented it in order to intimidate us." The ambassador was right: cf. Rodd to Grey, 23, 27, and 29 July; B 162, 202, 252. Lichnowsky's news was communicated to Vienna. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 7. In journalistic circles in London, it was being said that Italy and England had agreed to take no action against each other in the event of war. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 362.

‡ See above, I, 307–308.

§ King Carol, though not personally averse to the idea, did not think it practicable: "The King [of Bulgaria] is weak, possesses no authority, and the government might be swept away at any time. Moreover, no reliance was to be placed on Bulgaria, and as soon as Russia got wind of the agreement, she would stir up a revolution in Bulgaria. . . . Rumania could not conclude an alliance with Bulgaria at the present moment, but perhaps might do so in a year." Waldburg to foreign office, telegram, 10 July; G 28.

‖ Waldburg to Bethmann-Hollweg, 11 July; G 41.

Rumanian minister in Berlin, Dr. Beldiman, told Herr von Jagow that "King Carol would not make any change in his policy toward the Triple Alliance,"* and stated that his government, with a view to fulfilling its obligations as an ally, desired to be kept *au courant* by Germany

> so that it could take on its side the necessary political and military measures, especially for preparing the public opinion of the country, for the decisions that would have to be made eventually which are of great consequence to Rumania.†

Encouraged, apparently, by these declarations which ran counter to the reports of previous months, Herr von Jagow informed the Cabinet of Bucharest that "we are counting on the loyalty of Rumania."‡ But the response was discouraging: "Rumania would join with Greece in protesting if the Treaty of Bucharest were violated in the Austro-Serbian conflict" and would not permit Bulgaria to disturb it.§ When the Rumanian Government, hearing of the calling up of Bulgarian reservists, began to hint that "Rumania might be hindered in the complete fulfilment of the obligations of her alliance by the aggressive attitude of Bulgaria," the German foreign minister sought to allay the alarm by communicating to Bucharest the assurance of the Bulgarian premier to both the Austro-Hungarian* and German† ministers in Sofia that Bulgaria would remain neutral: "there ought to be no occasion for worry on this score."‡ But it was all to no avail. King Carol, who believed that when the conflict began, "Bulgaria would at once go over to the Russian camp," stated frankly that the temper of his own country "would render the support of Austria very difficult"; in fact he had telegraphed, so he told the German chargé, to the Emperor Francis Joseph, saying:

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* Jagow to Flotow and Tschirschky, telegrams, 26 July; G 193. According to the diary of King Carol, however, the king instructed Beldiman "to say in Berlin that the Austrian policy places us in great embarrassment"; C. Diamandy, "Ma mission en Russia, 1914–1918," I, in *Revue des deux mondes*, 7th period, IXL, 816 (15 February, 1929).

† Beldiman to foreign office, 26 July; G 208. Beldiman's statements were communicated to Vienna and Rome. Jagow to Tschirschky and Flotow, telegrams, 26 July; G 209, 210.

‡ Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 26 July; G 214. Szögyény reported to Vienna that "in the foreign office the conviction prevails that Rumania will fulfil her duty as an ally," provided the Triple Alliance would guarantee her against an attack by Bulgaria. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,718. This confidence was, however, not shared by Berchtold, for he telegraphed to the Austro-Hungarian minister in Bucharest: "In view of His Majesty the King's loyalty to the alliance and great wisdom, we expect that Rumania will observe strict neutrality. We ourselves, in accordance with our obligations, shall, in the further course of events, take no decisions touching the interests of Rumania without first getting into touch with our ally." Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 26 July; Austria-Hungary, Ministerium des Äusserns, *Diplomatische Aktenstücke betreffend der Beziehungen Osterreich-Ungarns zu Rumänien in der Zeit vom 22. Juli, 1914 bis 27. August, 1916* (Vienna, 1916), p. 2; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,721. Berchtold at this moment evidently had in mind, however, only an Austro-Serbian war.

§ Waldburg to foreign office, telegram, 26 July; G 262. William II commented, "Don't use such big words!"

> I am very desirous that the balance of power in the Balkan Peninsula, won by my country at the cost of so many sacrifices, should be left undisturbed.§

What chance was there for Count Berchtold's proposal

> to approach King Carol with the request to declare publicly, either by a *démarche* to be made by Rumania at St. Petersburg (possibly also by a secret telegram from King Carol to the Emperor Nicholas), or by the public announcement of the alliance, that in the event of a European conflagration Rumania would fight against Russia on the side of the Triple Alliance?‖

Evidently very little, if any at all; and while instructions in the desired sense were sent to Bucharest,¶ Herr Zimmermann told Count Szögyény that they could not expect King Carol to agree to the proposed steps or to publish the treaty.**

It was indeed a gloomy prospect which confronted Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg: Russia mobilizing, at least partially; Great Britain probably hostile in the event of war; Italy and Rumania evidently lost; no answer from Austria-Hungary to the telegram which he had sent twenty-four hours before; and his own generals anxious for military measures on the part of Germany. No wonder he told the British ambassador that, "tired as he was, he had to have a long talk to Jagow after he had finished with me!" The talk indeed seems to have lasted into the small hours of 30 July, and it was certainly productive. For the chancellor gathered himself together for a last desperate move which, if it did not prevent a European war, might put the responsibility on Russia and deprive her of the support of British public opinion.

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* Szögyény to German foreign office, 28 July; G 305.

† Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 251.

‡ Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 28 July; G 316.

§ Waldburg to foreign office, 29 July, received 10.55 P. M.; G 379.

‖ Szögyény to German foreign office, 29 July; G 352.

¶ Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 29 July, sent 30 July, 1.45 A. M.; G 389.

** Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 3.

He had first of all to placate Russia, for now that Austria-Hungary had refused direct conversations she might at any moment convert the partial mobilization into a general one; and then, according to the chancellor's own statements, war would be unavoidable. Fortunately, M. Sazonov had stated that the partial mobilization "was far from meaning war,"* and General Yanushkevich had hinted to Major von Eggeling that "even in the event of war no offensive was intended" [? against Germany].† Accordingly during the next four hours four telegrams were sent to St. Petersburg with the object of persuading the Russian Government to hold its hand while Germany endeavored to mediate.

At 11.05 P. M. Count Pourtalès was instructed to disclose—for the first time—the German advice to Austria:

> In order still to avoid the threatening catastrophe, we are working in Vienna to get the Austro-Hungarian Government to declare once more to Russia, in confirmation of its previous assurance, that it does not contemplate territorial acquisitions in Serbia‡ and that its military measures had in view simply a temporary occupation, in order to secure from Serbia guarantees of future good behavior.§

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, received 8.29 P. M.; G 365.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, received 9.45 P. M.; G 370.

‡ Shortly afterward a telegram arrived from Vienna according to which the Russian ambassador there had informed Tschirschky that "such a declaration was worthless." Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, received 12.40 A. M., 30 July; G 386.

§ Cf. Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 28 July; G 323.

If Austria-Hungary were to make such a declaration, "Russia will have obtained all that she desires," and Germany expected that in such case, "Russia will not precipitate any warlike operations against Austria."* The Russian Government was not asked to suspend its partial mobilization,† which was a complete reversal of the position taken at noon when a warning had been despatched against further preparations. To make sure that this was understood and to allay the "state of great excitement" in which Sazonov had received that warning,‡ another telegram was sent at 2.55 A. M. (30 July):

> Please tell M. Sazonov that we are continuing to mediate, on condition, however, that in the meantime all hostilities against Austria are suspended on the part of Russia.§

And a few minutes later yet another telegram:

> Vienna's refusal to enter upon conversations must have occurred before our last *démarche* at Vienna, the result of which has not yet been reported.||

So far as one can judge, the German chancellor was quite sincere in his effort to restrain Russia while he persuaded Austria-Hungary to negotiate. It is true that he declared "naturally out of the question"¶ the Tsar's proposal to "give over" the Austro-Serbian issue to the Hague Tribunal,** but it is quite possible that William II, who was notoriously opposed to arbitration, forbade any consideration of it.†† But Count Portalès was instructed "to clear up by an immediate talk with M. Sazonov the alleged discrepancy between your language and the

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, "urgent," 29 July; G 380.

† The original draft of the telegram did call on Russia to "put an end to the projected mobilization," but this was changed by Jagow. Evidently there was a division of opinion in the foreign office.

‡ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 378.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 30 July; G 392.

|| Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 30 July, 3.05 A. M.; G 397.

¶ Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 30 July, 2.40 A. M.; G 391.

** Nicholas II to William II, telegram, 29 July; G 366. See above, p. 109.

†† He noted contemptuously on the telegram, "Well, well!" [*Nanu!*].

telegram of His Majesty"; which was at least conciliatory. The German position was in fact cleverly taken (for the first time since the crisis began). If Russia heeded the admonitions of the chancellor, there was a chance—not a large one, but still a chance—to arrange a settlement; if she did not, then Herr von Bethmann could say that the Russian Government had been impatient and must therefore bear the responsibility for the consequences. Provided, of course, that Austria-Hungary accepted the German proposals of the night before and made the suggested declaration to Russia, and did so promptly.

With the object of accelerating the decision of Vienna the German chancellor, between 10.30 P. M. on 29 July and 3.30 A. M. on 30 July, sent no fewer than six telegrams urging the Austro-Hungarian Government to negotiate with Russia. But, unfortunately for Herr von Bethmann, he was not a free agent, and he must have realized the fact. Having pushed Count Berchtold into a premature declaration of war, having assured him that Germany desired to see Austria-Hungary obtain "the complete fulfilment of her demands" and having instructed Herr von Tschirschky "to avoid very carefully creating the impression that we wish to hold Austria back,"* the chancellor was obviously hard put to find a method of inducing the Cabinet of Vienna to take a step which, from its point of view, would be a holding back and which might prejudice the fulfilment of the demands. After having given Vienna to understand that the motive of his mediation was to put Russia in the wrong, so that in German eyes "we must appear as having been forced into the war," the chancellor had now to insist that the new *démarche* be taken seriously, in order to prevent a European war (to which he had hitherto consented). Nor was this his only difficulty. The request of General Conrad made that morning—and it was the second time of asking—for a clear declaration to Russia of Germany's readiness to answer Russian mobilization by her own, had still to be answered. If it were granted, then the game being played *vis-à-vis* London would be compromised, and Austria-Hungary, sure of German military action, would have no reason to adopt the *'Halt in Belgrad.'* If it were refused, the reproach would be justified that Germany was unwilling to afford that diplomatic support which might spare the Dual Monarchy the necessity of waging war with Russia. If Herr von Bethmann felt disposed to complain that Count Berchtold had not replied to the *'Halt in Belgrad'* proposal, the latter had the obvious retort that *his* request had not been answered. In connection with this latter point, the time factor must not be forgotten. If the situation were not cleared up by 1 August, the Austro-Hungarian armies, according to General Conrad's plan, would be so committed to troop movements toward Serbia that they could not be quickly transferred to Galicia; if Russia then attacked Austria, she would enjoy a distinct military advantage which could be offset only by the use of German troops intended for the invasion of France. Practically speaking, therefore, the German chancellor had two days, 30 July and 31 July, in which to secure Austria's acceptance of the *'Halt in Belgrad'* and after that Russia's agreement to this compromise. If he did not succeed, he would probably be constrained, for strictly military reasons, to declare war on Russia on 1 August. With these several considerations in mind, we may now examine the six telegrams sent to Vienna.

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* See above, pp. 127–128.

The first was a request to Herr von Tschirschky to expedite the *démarche* for which he had been instructed the night before (the *'Halt in Belgrad'* proposal), which he should have carried out that morning.* The next repeated the telegram from the Emperor to the Tsar.† Thirdly, Prince Lichnowsky's long telegram, according to which Sir Edward Grey had spoken favorably of the Italian suggestion that Serbia should accept the Austrian note on the advice of the Powers‡ and urged "the immediate beginning of conversations," was transmitted for

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 29 July, 10.30 P. M.; G 377. For Tschirschky's action, see below, pp. 174-175.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July, 12.10 A. M.; G 383.

‡ G 357; see above, p. 158.

Count Berchtold's information; and Herr von Tschirschky was instructed to say that

> we consider such a compliance on the part of Serbia a suitable basis for negotiations if a part of Serbian territory is occupied as a pledge.*

In the fourth message, an effort was made to explain the position of Russia. The Russian Government had said that

> Russian mobilization did not in any way signify war, as was the case in western Europe; the Russian army could stand to arms for a long time without crossing the frontier; relations with Vienna had not been broken off, and Russia wished to avoid war if it were at all possible.

It complained that the conversations at St. Petersburg had made no progress. Wherefore, said Herr von Bethmann, "we must urgently request that, in order to avoid a general catastrophe, or at least to put Russia in the wrong, Vienna will inaugurate and continue conversations" on the basis of the proposed *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan.†

Thus Germany was asking her ally to promise to stop military operations with the occupation of Belgrade in order that the Powers might be given the opportunity to advise Serbia to accept the Austro-Hungarian note; to the extent that the principle of negotiation was now recognized, this attitude was distinctly less intransigent than that hitherto maintained by the German Government. Hardly had the last telegram been sent when an answer was received from Vienna to the original *'Halt in Belgrad'* proposal. "Count Berchtold," reported Herr von Tschirschky, "says that he is not in a position to give me a reply at once."* As this proposal had offered Austria more than the suggestions just transmitted, more pressure was evidently required. So Herr von Bethmann despatched two more telegrams. In the first, he repeated most of Prince Lichnowsky's telegram containing the warning of Sir Edward Grey, and then declared:

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July, 12.30 A. M.; G 384.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July, 12.30 A. M.; G 385. The original draft, which was altered by Jagow, had quite a different ring: "The Russian ambassador has informed us here that Russia will mobilize against Austria to-morrow. In order to put Russia in the wrong before the world for carrying out such a measure, it appears to us urgently necessary that the Vienna Cabinet should make the declaration recommended by us [territorial disinterestedness] in St. Petersburg and to the other Great Powers without delay. We advise this not in order to deceive, but simply to improve our moral position in the public opinion of Europe."

> If Austria refuses all mediation, we thereby stand confronted with a conflagration in which England will be against us and Italy and Rumania according to all signs will not go with us; we shall be two Great Powers against four. Thanks to the opposition of England, the principal burden of the struggle will fall on Germany. Austria's political prestige, the honor of her army, as well as her just claims against Serbia, can be adequately satisfied by the occupation of Belgrade or other places. By the humiliation of Serbia she would be recovering her position both in the Balkans and as against Russia. In these circumstances, we must urgently and emphatically recommend to the Vienna Cabinet the acceptance of mediation on the above-mentioned honorable terms. The responsibility for the consequences that would otherwise follow would be an uncommonly heavy one for Austria and ourselves.†

Strong language, without any reservations or talk of putting Russia in the wrong; on the contrary, recognition that the Central Powers will be in the wrong if mediation is refused. So it seems. But Herr von Bethmann failed to communicate to Vienna the last paragraph of Prince Lichnowsky's telegram, which read:

> To my Italian colleague, who has just left me, Sir E. Grey said that he believed that, if mediation were accepted, he would be able to secure for Austria every satisfaction; there was no longer any question of a humiliating retreat for Austria, as the Serbs would in any case be punished and compelled, with

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; received 30 July, 1.30 A. M.; G 388.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, "urgent," 30 July, 2.55 A. M.; G 395.

> the consent of Russia, to subordinate themselves to the wishes of Austria. Thus Austria could secure guarantees for the future without a war which would endanger the peace of Europe.

Was the chancellor afraid that Count Berchtold would accept this argument at its face value? One wonders if the German statesman meant his pressure on Vienna as seriously as his own language implies.

In the last telegram of the series, Count Berchtold was asked to explain why he was hinting to the Russian ambassador in Vienna about the possibility of conversations and saying just the opposite to the Russian foreign minister.* In protest Herr von Bethmann fired his heaviest shell:

> We cannot expect Austria to negotiate with Serbia, with whom she is at war. A refusal to enter into an exchange of views with St. Petersburg would, however, be a serious mistake, for that is just what would provoke the armed intervention of Russia—which Austria is in the first instance interested in preventing.
>
> We are ready to fulfil the obligations of our alliance, but must refuse to be drawn into a world conflagration by Vienna lightheartedly and without regard for our advice. Vienna also appears to be disregarding our counsels in the Italian question.
>
> Please speak to Count Berchtold at once with all possible emphasis and in great seriousness.†

That the German chancellor should go so far as to threaten to denounce the alliance is proof of his desperation; and one would be inclined to say, of his entire sincerity, had he not omitted from the telegram of Count Pourtalès which he transmitted the statement that M. Sazonov "was grasping at every straw" to avoid war. But even if his sincerity be admitted, he did not, one must point out, ask Austria-Hungary not to invade Serbia at all—which was the essence of the Russian demands. He did not retract the promises of 5 July and 6 July, though he may be said to have curtailed their effectiveness.

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* Bethmann derived this impression from the telegrams of Tschirschky (G 356) and Pourtalès (G 365), the latter of which he communicated to Vienna. Speaking with Schebeko, Berchtold had declined a discussion with Serbia, whereas Sazonov understood that Berchtold declined conversations with Russia.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July, 3 A. M.; G 396.

On the other hand, since Sir Edward Grey had independently suggested that Austria-Hungary might occupy Serbian territory as a guarantee of Serbian performance, Herr von Bethmann might reasonably argue that he need not go farther. And from his point of view, the vital thing was that after five days of divergent opinions, Great Britain and Germany were agreed on a formula of mediation (albeit with the difference that Grey was thinking in terms of the Serbian reply and Bethmann of the Austrian ultimatum) and that the prospects of securing British neutrality in case mediation failed were possibly not hopeless.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FAILURE OF MEDIATION

VIENNA AND BERLIN, 29–30 JULY

BY the declaration of war against Serbia, Austria-Hungary had burned her bridges. It was now Count Berchtold's task to create, if possible, a favorable diplomatic situation which would permit the Monarchy to conduct a localized war, and with the object of isolating Russia, he promptly addressed himself to her associates in the Triple Entente. On the afternoon of 28 July, he instructed Count Szécsen and Count Mensdorff to communicate to the French and British Governments the promised *dossier* and the Austro-Hungarian commentary on the Serbian reply.* The next day, 29 July, he assumed an attitude of elaborate politeness all around. Count Szápáry was informed that M. Sazonov's request for mediation had indeed arrived too late: "the declaration of a state of war [with Serbia] had already been definitely decided on."† In similar spirit a lengthy statement was handed to the German ambassador and telegraphed to the capitals explaining why Sir Edward Grey's proposal to take the Serbian reply as a basis of negotiation was not acceptable:

> At the time the German *démarche* was made a state of war already existed between the Monarchy and Serbia, and thus the Serbian reply has already been superseded by events.‡

What Count Berchtold said was strictly true, and it had the effect of stopping inconvenient remonstrances. The ambassadors of the other Powers were agreed that "there is no step which we could usefully take to stop war with Servia"; the Duke of Avarna was even convinced that Austria-Hungary would refuse to convert into "a binding engagement to Europe" the declaration made to Russia that she desired neither to acquire Serbian territory nor to destroy the independence of Serbia.* Events had to take their course.

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* Berchtold to Szécsen and Mensdorff, telegram, 28 July; A II, 88, 89. For the Austrian commentary, see above, I, 536–538.

† Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 29 July; A III 20.

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 400. Berchtold to Szápáry, Mensdorff, Szécsen and Mérey, telegram, 29 July; A III 25. Berchtold contested Grey's view that the Serbian reply was "an assent to all our demands with one exception." For Tschirschky's delay in presenting the German suggestion, see above, p. 82.

Far more important, from Count Berchtold's point of view, than these approaches to the Powers of the Triple Entente was his *démarche* in Berlin. On the evening of 28 July, as has already been recorded,† he renewed his suggestion that the German Government should warn Russia against further military preparations and threaten to take counter-measures "of the most far-reaching character" if they were not stopped. In the existing political and military situation, the request was entirely justified, and in view of the previous attitude of the German Government, Count Berchtold was entitled to expect a prompt and satisfactory answer.

Instead, on 29 July, he had to listen to Herr von Tschirschky present the suggestion of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, sent from Berlin the night before, that Austria should content herself with the occupation of Belgrade and enter into negotiations with Russia.‡ The Austro-Hungarian foreign minister might well have been indignant. What Germany suggested was that the Monarchy should give up its military action against Serbia and content itself with a diplomatic solution—after it had been explained to Berlin that a diplomatic solution would be worthless and that contention had been accepted by Berlin. Count Berchtold appears, however, to have kept his temper and resorted to evasion. He professed his willingness to repeat to Russia his declaration of territorial disinterestedness, but, with reference to the military aspect of the suggestion, said that "he was not in a position to give a reply at once." Quite late in the day, Herr von Tschirschky reported to Berlin:

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* Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 265. Cf. Dumaine to Bienvenu-Martin, telegram, 29 July; F 93.

† See above, p. 132.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 28 July; G 323. See above, pp. 126–128.

> In spite of my representations as to the urgency of the matter, I have up to this evening received no further communication.*

It would be interesting to know how urgent the ambassador represented the matter to be. Count Berchtold's memorandum of the conversation† is a mere summary of the German chancellor's telegram, without any reference to the desirability of preventing the war, and concludes with what must have been an explanation offered by Tschirschky (since it does not appear in the original telegram) that "principally out of regard for the public opinion of England" was it important to demonstrate that "Russia alone would bear the responsibility in the event of our war against Serbia being extended to the other Powers." There is no indication that pressure was exerted by Tschirschky to secure acceptance of the German suggestion, although in memoranda of other conversations Berchtold mentions such pressure.‡ But pressure or no pressure, the Austro-Hungarian minister did not intend to yield; in fact, he held the trumps in his hand.

In the late afternoon of 29 July the Russian ambassador informed his colleagues of the Russian partial mobilization§ and presumably the Ballplatz as well, although there is no record of such a communication. As soon as General Conrad heard the news, he proposed a double *démarche:* (1) Russia should be asked "what this step signified" and informed that "we shall not let ourselves be deterred in any way by it from our action against Serbia"; (2) Germany should be requested to make a positive declaration in Paris and St. Petersburg that "even the mobilization of Russia against Austria-Hungary alone would cause the mobilization of Germany against Russia," it being understood that Austria would proceed at once to general mobilization.* Hitherto he had not asked for a declaration in Paris, but the Russian mobilization created a new situation. The chief of staff had no hope that "Russia would content herself with a mere threat"; on the contrary, "Austria-Hungary was now threatened with the danger of being overrun by the Russian armies if she hesitated with her own general mobilization."† He did not wish on that account to abandon the operations against Serbia or to make any concession; but his arrangements with General von Moltke, as recorded in the letters of 1909, were based on the assumption that France would join Russia in a war against the Central Powers, and a declaration in Paris was a logical step, for the proposal of General Conrad was in exact keeping with the terms of those letters.

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, 11.50 P. M.; G 388.

† A III 24.

‡ The British ambassador reported: "French ambassador hears from Berlin that German ambassador at Vienna is instructed to speak seriously to Austro-Hungarian Government against acting in a manner calculated to provoke European war. Unfortunately German ambassador is himself so identified with extreme anti-Servian and anti-Russian feeling prevalent in Vienna that he is not likely to plead cause of peace with entire sincerity." Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 307.

§ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, 7.30 P. M.; G 386. Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 295. Dumaine to Viviani, 30 July; F 104. Tschirschky and Dumaine got the impression from Schebeko's statement that localization of the war was now impossible, whereas Bunsen gathered that "Russia would go a long way to meet Austrian demands on Servia," but that Schebeko feared "effect on Russian public opinion if a serious engagement takes place before an agreement is reached." The German ambassador, "who feigns much surprise that Russia should have taken so much interest in fate of Servia," finally said to his French colleague that "personally he thought German Government might consent to act as a mediator with other three Powers, provided that proposals could still be formulated which would have any prospect of acceptance on both sides."

That same evening welcome news was received from Berlin with reference to the *démarche* of the night before requesting that a warning be sent to St. Petersburg.‡ "Already on Sunday," Count Szögyény reported, "the German Government had had it stated in St. Petersburg that Russian mobilization would entail German mobilization," and the declaration had been renewed that day.§ Count Berchtold now had the game in his hands. Since Germany was prepared to act, and act decisively, it was safe for Austria-Hungary to proceed with her original plan against Serbia. Accordingly, Count Berchtold adopted General Conrad's proposal. A note was sent to Berlin stating that the action against Serbia would be continued and that Austrian general mobilization would follow at once if the Russian measures were not stopped "without delay." But "as a last effort to avoid a European war" the German Government was desired to declare "in a friendly manner" to Russia and France that

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* Conrad, IV, 143. During the evening Conrad was shown a report from the minister in Bucharest that Rumania would observe neutrality and would not lend the military assistance against Russia provided for by the treaty of alliance; *ibid.*, pp. 144–145. The report (Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,876) was, however, received the day before.

† *Ibid.*, IV, 146.

‡ See above, p. 134.

§ Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 4.

> the continuation of Russian mobilization would have to be followed by counter-measures in Germany and Austria, which must lead to serious consequences.

The Austro-Hungarian ambassadors in Paris and St. Petersburg would be instructed to make similar declarations as soon as their German colleagues were so ordered; and if the German Government thought it expedient, Italy should be invited to join in these *démarches.** This resolute attitude on the part of Count Berchtold shows how little impression the suggestion of the German chancellor, as interpreted by Herr von Tschirschky, for a *'Halt in Belgrad'* had made. Since Herr von Bethmann had disavowed any "wish to hold Austria back" and had expressed his approval of "the object aimed at by Austria,"† the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister took the German chancellor at his word.

The next day, probably during the morning, the answer of the Austro-Hungarian Government to the *'Halt in Belgrad'* suggestion was communicated to the German ambassador. Counts Berchtold and Forgách said that

> instructions have gone to Count Szápáry to begin‡ conversa-

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* Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 29 July; A III 1. Without waiting to learn the result of his proposal, Berchtold sent the instructions referred to to the ambassadors in St. Petersburg and Paris. Berchtold to Szápáry and Szécsen, telegrams, 29 July; A III 15.

† G 323; see above, p 128.

‡ The German Emperor commented, "Now, for the first time!"

> tions with M. Sazonov. Count Szápáry is authorized to explain the note to the Russian minister, although it has of course been rendered out of date by the declaration of war, and to receive any further suggestion which may be made on the part of Russia, as well as to discuss with Sazonov all questions directly affecting Austro-Russian relations.*

Austria-Hungary, then, did not propose to discuss the Serbian question with Russia, but merely to explain her position. Nevertheless, Count Berchtold promised to send for M. Schebeko and to say to him:

> The Monarchy does not contemplate any territorial acquisitions in Serbia, and after the conclusion of peace intends to occupy Serbian territory only temporarily, in order to compel the Serbian Government to carry out its demands fully and give guarantees for its future good behavior. The evacuation of Serbian territory on the part of the Monarchy will follow according as Serbia carries out the conditions of peace.†

Thus Count Berchtold maintained his refusal to converse with Russia about Serbia and was willing to give only vague assurances about the future status of Serbia. The answer, on a first reading, may appear to be an acceptance of the German suggestion;‡ but by reserving the right to occupy Serbian territory (without a specific limitation to Belgrade) "after the conclusion of peace," the Austro-Hungarian minister apparently intended to keep his hands free for the future.§ His reply was really a polite refusal.

When he received the Russian ambassador later in the day, he did not altogether keep his promise to Tschirschky. Although he did say to M. Schebeko that a conversation with M. Sazonov "could only take the form of explanations *post hoc* [*nachträglicher*], as it had never been our intention to depart from any of the points of the note"; although he repeated that "we do not wish to pursue a policy of conquest in Serbia or to infringe her sovereignty"; he did not, according to his record of the interview, state that the occupation of Serbia would be of a temporary character. Then, after an academic discussion of Austro-Russian relations, Count Berchtold declared that he could not understand the Russian mobilization, "for no dispute existed between Russia and us," for which reason Austria had not mobilized in Galicia, although this measure would now be forced upon her.* The Austro-Hungarian Government, then, agreed to conversations with Russia only on the condition that they did not involve any discussion of the Austro-Serbian difficulty.†

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* This was an accurate summary of the instructions to Szápáry. Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 30 July; A III 44. The ambassador was instructed to confine himself to a discussion "which would not be binding and would deal only with generalities" and to report "immediately"; but there was not a word about Serbia, which was of course the essence of the controversy.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 433.

‡ The German Emperor commented the next day: "Thus my proposal practically accepted and treated as I have telegraphed it to the Tsar."

§ During the war the German Government published Tschirschky's telegram (*Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 October, 1917) in order to make it seem that Berchtold had accepted the German proposal—but the words "after the conclusion of peace" were omitted.

Count Berchtold also endeavored to meet the second argument put forward by M. Sazonov for the Russian mobilization: that eight corps were not necessary for an advance against

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* Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 30 July; A III 45. The Russian ambassador "received the impression that Austria really desires to come to an understanding with us, but does not consider it practicable to suspend her operations against Serbia before she has received full satisfaction and genuine guarantees for the future"—which does not seem the same thing as a temporary occupation. Schebeko to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; R, 1925 113.

† Berchtold gave Tschirschky a brief account of what he had said to Schebeko, including a statement that he "had in no way shown himself unreceptive" to a suggestion of the ambassador that "nous pourrions aussi causer de nos propres affaires." But he did not say that he had informed Schebeko of the Austrian willingness to evacuate Serbian territory after the demands had been fulfilled. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 448.

Schebeko gave Dumaine this version of his interview: "With a view to settling the Austro-Serbian dispute, it was agreed that *pourparlers* should be resumed at St. Petersburg between M. Sazonov and Count Szápáry; they had only been interrupted owing to a misunderstanding, as Count Berchtold thought that the Russian minister for foreign affairs claimed that the Austrian representative should be given powers which would allow him to modify the terms of the Austrian ultimatum [which was exactly what Sazonov did claim]. Count Szápáry will be authorized only to discuss what settlement might be compatible with the dignity and prestige for which both Empires were equally concerned." Dumaine to Viviani, 30 July; F 104. Bunsen understood that Berchtold had said that "there was no objection to conversations between the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg being continued, although he did not say that they could be resumed on the basis of Serbian reply." Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 311. The Italian Government was correctly informed: San Giuliano told Rodd that "he had heard Austrian Government had declined further direct conversations at St. Petersburg." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 331.

Serbia and that therefore the measure must be considered as directed in part against Russia.[*] He asked Count Szápáry to explain to the Russian minister that eight corps were not too many troops to mobilize against the 400,000 men which Serbia was expected to put in the field, and to deny that Austria-Hungary had any hostile design against Russia.[†] From a military point of view, the argument was reasonable enough, for Conrad had always insisted on taking the field against Serbia only with overwhelming numbers, while on the other hand he did not intend to launch an attack on Russia. But from the political point of view this only strengthened the Russian conviction that the complete crushing of Serbia was intended.

During the day the German ambassador carried out the two new *démarches,* the instructions for which he received during the morning. To Bethmann's recommendation of the San Giuliano-Grey suggestion that Serbia might accept the Austro-Hungarian note if explanations were given of Points 5 and 6,[‡] Count Berchtold replied that "Serbia had made reservations with regard to various other points" and that "since a state of war had supervened, Austria's conditions would naturally have to be different."[§] This was a second rebuff for the German chancellor.

Most important of all was the discussion of Bethmann's second and peremptory demand that Austria should agree to the British proposal for mediation,[||] which was received while Herr von Tschirschky was lunching at the Ballplatz with Count Berchtold. The minister listened "pale and silent" while the message from Berlin was being read—twice—and would only say that he would report the suggestion to the Emperor Francis Joseph, even though Tschirschky, this time apparently in earnest, appealed to Berchtold and Forgách "to keep in mind the incalculable consequences of a refusal of mediation." When Count Berchtold left to change his clothes for his audience of the Emperor, the ambassador "appealed very seriously to Count Forgách's conscience"; but the latter, while admitting that "acceptance of mediation was necessary," asserted that "a limitation of the military operations now in progress seemed to him to be scarcely possible."* The ambassador was reduced to telephoning to Berlin that an answer to the German proposal could not be given before the next day, on the ground that Count Tisza would not arrive in Vienna until the next morning.†

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[*] He was informed of this from Berlin. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 5. Cf. Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 343. Cf. also Conrad, IV, 145.

[†] Berchtold to Szápáry, telegram, 30 July; A III 29.

[‡] G 384; see above, pp. 168–169.

[§] Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 432.

[||] G 395; see above, p. 170.

Although Count Berchtold was doubtless animated by political considerations in rejecting the *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan, there were in fact serious military objections to it. In the first place, if the Austro-Hungarian army stopped advancing after the occupation of Belgrade—assuming that it was effected—the Serbs would be given time to organize their defenses farther south, and in case the negotiations with Russia led to no result, the task of defeating the Serbian army would be much more difficult. But, secondly, Conrad's plan of campaign called for an invasion of Serbia from the west, that is, from Bosnia, across the Drina river, and not from the north.‡ There was, it is true, to be an advance from Syrmia on Belgrade by the Second Army, but it was just this army which was earmarked for transfer to the Galician front in case Russia intervened. Russia had already ordered partial mobilization; if she proceeded to general mobilization, the Second Army would have to be shifted, and there would be no troops for an occupation of Belgrade.§

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 465. When Tschirschky renewed his argument later in the day, he was told by Hoyos and Forgách that "the feeling in the army and among the people" would not permit any restriction of military operations—which was obviously an effort to gain time.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, telegram, 30 July; G 440.

‡ Conrad had decided that the crossing of the Save and the Danube was too difficult an operation; General A. Krauss, *Die Ursachen unserer Niederlage* (Munich, 1920), pp. 122–128.

§ Conrad, IV, 112–113; A. von Wegerer, "Der Halt in Belgrad," in *KSF*, I, 30–34 (December, 1923); R. Kiszling, "Die österreichisch-ungarischen Kriegsvorbereitungen und die Mobilmachungsmassnahmen gegen Russland 1914," in *KSF*, IV, 367–371 (June, 1926).

While Count Berchtold and his assistants on 30 July were thus skirmishing with the ambassadors, General Conrad was pressing for general mobilization as the necessary reply to the Russian measures. The foreign minister, he said, could open negotiations with Russia "as much as he liked," but "every delay [in mobilization] would only make the military situation worse." To the minister's inconsequential and startling query whether they could financially afford a war with Russia, the soldier replied that it was too late to talk of such things: "our situation is such that there is no way out." The diplomatic representations of Berlin and London made equally little impression on him. "The proposal to 'humiliate' [*züchtigen*] Serbia rested on an illusion": such proceedings might be useful against "negro races," but "against European states which had well-organized armies, they were futile because they would lead to no result."* Count Berchtold seems to have yielded, for he informed Herr von Tschirschky that general mobilization would be ordered "as soon as Berlin has agreed to it."†

Actually Vienna did not wait for Berlin to agree, at least formally. Sometime during the day, probably about noon, a telegram was received by the chief of staff from Captain von Fleischmann, one of his aides, concerning a conversation with General von Moltke. The chief of the German general staff had said:

> Russian mobilization not yet a reason for [German] mobilization: [the latter] only when a state of war exists between the Monarchy and Russia. In contrast to the customary Russian mobilizations and demobilizations, German mobilization would lead unconditionally to war. Do not declare war on Russia, but await the Russian attack.‡

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* Conrad, IV, 148, 150.

† Tschirschky's note on G 385; *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, I, 98.

‡ Conrad, IV, 152. The telegram has not been found in the Austrian archives, but its authenticity is confirmed by Fleischmann himself, who states that he saw Moltke about 10 A. M. Moltke wrote the telegram with his own hand and instructed him to telephone it to Conrad. T. von Schäfer, "Generaloberst von Moltke in den Tagen vor der Mobilmachung und seine Einwirkung auf Oesterreich-Ungarn,"

Presumably this was regarded as the German answer to the *démarche* of the evening before.* So it is not surprising that, as Conrad put it, "it appeared as if the Emperor William was thinking of drawing back and opinion in Berlin had swung round on account of Italy's bolt."† As seen from Vienna, the attitude of Berlin was more alarming than that of St. Petersburg. So Conrad replied to Moltke: "We shall not attack Russia and shall not begin the war."‡ But a second message from Captain von Fleischmann, sent at 1.15 P. M., stated that General von Moltke wished to know what decisions the Austro-Hungarian Government would take in face of the Russian partial mobilization.§ The implication certainly was that the German general staff expected Austria-Hungary to mobilize.

In the latter part of the day, the foreign minister, the war minister and the chief of staff were received by the Emperor, nominally for a discussion of what should be done in case Serbia were to yield. They decided that the ultimatum must be accepted on every point and that Serbia must pay the costs of the Austro-Hungarian mobilization; Conrad, for his part, insisted on cessions of territory "which would at least make our military position secure." Actually, the purpose of the audience was to secure Francis Joseph's consent to mobilization. Count Berchtold again put forward his financial qualms: "it will cost millions."

CONRAD: The Monarchy is at stake.

BERCHTOLD: If the army is sent to Galicia, that will mean war with Russia.

CONRAD: If the Russians do nothing against us, we need do nothing against them.

In the end a three-fold decision was reached: [1] the war against Serbia was to be continued; [2] the British proposal was to be answered politely, but without any consideration of

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in *KSF*, IV, 522–524 (August, 1926). It is a reasonable presumption that this message reached Vienna by noon or the early afternoon.

* See above, p. 177.

† Conrad, IV, 151.

‡ Conrad, IV, 152.

§ Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, IV, 524. The hour of receipt is not stated.

its merits;* [3] general mobilization was to be ordered on 1 August, with 4 August as the first day of mobilization; on this point, however, there would be more discussion on the next day (31 July).†

Another decision was taken which throws a clear light on the intentions of the Austro-Hungarian Government. The Emperor approved a proposal of the chief of staff that

> in the case of general mobilization all the armies should be placed under the command of His Imperial Highness the Archduke Frederick and that General Headquarters [*Armeeoberkommando*] should be established *at first* in the Serbian theatre of war, for if war later broke out with Russia, it could be transferred in good season to Galicia.‡

Thus despite the fact that Russia had ordered partial mobilization against her, Austria-Hungary proposed to prosecute her war against Serbia. The ordering of general mobilization was not to bring a change from 'Case B' to 'Case R': it would merely assemble in Galicia the remaining army corps not involved in the concentration against Serbia. The danger of having to surrender the fruits of a military victory over Serbia, in order to satisfy the German chancellor's desire to put Russia in the wrong, was greater than the military danger from Russia immediately in prospect, whose schedule of mobilization was presumably slower than that of Austria-Hungary. The concentration in Galicia was a necessary precaution, but only a precaution: "If the Russians do nothing against us, we need do nothing against them." Any attack by Russia would bring Germany into the war, and this would necessitate Russian general mobilization, which would correspondingly delay the Russian military arrangements and postpone the hour of real danger in Galicia. Before then, General Conrad hoped to have achieved his victory over the Serbian army on the battleground east of the Drina and be in a position to transfer the troops concentrated north of the Save and Danube to their ultimate destination in Galicia. However risky these close-cut calculations might be, the subsequent course of events makes it certain that this was the programme adopted at the conference with the Emperor on 30 July. General Conrad did not then regard a general European war as imminent, and did not consider that Russian partial mobilization or Austro-Hungarian general mobilization necessarily "meant war."

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* The discussions at Vienna on this and the following day seem to have been concerned exclusively with the *British* proposal; nothing was said about the *German* suggestion. It will not be forgotten that Szögyény had telegraphed on 27 July (A II 68; see above, p. 72) that the German Government would pass on British proposals in order to humor Sir Edward Grey, but it did not associate itself with them. Whether this affected the Austro-Hungarian decisions is not revealed.

† Conrad, IV, 150–151. The British military attaché reported that the XI corps in Lemberg had received the order to mobilize on 29 July and that "all cavalry" had been mobilized on 30 July. Bunsen to Grey, telegrams, 30 July; B 312, 327. The attaché was probably misinformed, but secret orders may have been issued.

‡ Conrad, IV, 151.

The decisions arrived at were not fully revealed to Germany. Herr von Tschirschky was indeed told that "Conrad von Hötzendorf was this evening to submit to the Emperor the order for general mobilization."* But this brief communication did not include the fact that the concentration against Serbia was to go forward: evidently Conrad wished to keep back this news as long as possible, and the reply which he drafted at 7.30 P. M. in answer to Moltke's request for a statement of the intentions of Austria-Hungary was not to be sent until 8 o'clock the next morning: The telegram read:

> According to the decision of His Majesty it has been resolved: To wage war against Serbia, to mobilize the rest of the army, and to concentrate it in Galicia. First day of mobilization, 4 August. Order for mobilization will be issued to-day. Request notification of first day of mobilization there [Berlin—a nice touch, for at the time of drafting Conrad had not received a third telegram from Berlin, which promised German mobilization].†

It will be noticed that the order of mobilization was promised for 31 July, although the decision taken that afternoon was for 1 August. In announcing this change, General Conrad was seemingly exceeding his authority. But he may have meant merely to say that the formal decision for mobilization would be taken at the ministerial council arranged for the next day; and since the first day of mobilization was fixed for 4 August, the day on which the order was issued was of secondary importance, at least from the military, though perhaps not from the diplomatic, point of view.

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* Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 465.

† Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, IV, 536; G 825. For the third telegram, see below, pp. 196. 197.

We have now to consider what was happening on this same day, 30 July, in Berlin.

BERLIN, 30 JULY

On the morning of 30 July the German chancellor can have been under no illusions about the extreme gravity of the situation. He knew that Count Berchtold "was not in a position to give a reply . . . at once" to the suggestion of a *'Halt in Belgrad.'*[*] On the other hand, M. Sazonov, persuaded that Russia could not leave Serbia in the lurch, had stated that "the order for mobilization could no longer be retracted."[†] Neither Vienna nor St. Petersburg had yielded to the representations of Berlin. That Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg now regarded war as practically unavoidable is attested by both his words and his actions. At the meeting of the Prussian council of ministers held about noon, he said:

> All governments, including that of Russia, and the great majority of the nations, were anxious for peace, but control had been lost and the stone had started rolling. As a *politician, he would not give up his hopes and efforts for the maintenance of peace,* so long as his *démarche* in Vienna had not been rejected. The decision might come in a short time, then another marching route would be entered upon.[‡]

Because he saw little hope of preventing war, he advised the Emperor to send a telegram to the Tsar (of which more presently): the telegram would be "a particularly important document historically."[*] Most conclusive of all was the action taken with reference to Sweden. A telegram to the minister in Stockholm ran thus:

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[*] Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July, received 30 July, 1.30 A. M.; G 388. See above, pp. 169–170.

[†] Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 7.25 A. M.; G 401. Pourtalès added his personal opinion that "Sazonov was trying hard to make sure that the Tsar stands firm."

[‡] Protocol of the meeting; G 456.

> We have reason to assume that England will very soon take part in the war on the side of the Dual Alliance. Reservation of freedom of action in Swedish declaration of neutrality in the event of English intervention therefore urgently to be desired.[†]

So far as the German chancellor, then, was concerned, his action on 30 July has to be regarded primarily from the point of view of diplomatic tactics. Convinced that the war was about to break (however much he would like to avoid it, now that the intervention of Great Britain had to be reckoned with), his primary concern was to stage the *dénouement* in a fashion favorable to Germany; "it is of the greatest importance," he told the Prussian ministerial council, "to put Russia in the position of the guilty party."[‡]

His first task was to persuade his master to continue the work of mediation. For William II, incensed by the Tsar's statement that "the military measures which have now come into force were decided five days ago," described the appeal of Nicholas for his continued mediation as "only a manœuvre to hold us back and increase the start they have already got," and declared roundly, "My work is at an end!"[§] To counter this attitude, the chancellor informed the Emperor of his latest *démarche* in Vienna and sent him a copy of Prince Lichnowsky's telegram[||] containing the warning of Sir Edward Grey.[¶]

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[*] Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 30 July, 11.15 A. M.; G 408.

[†] Bethmann-Hollweg to Reichenau, telegram, 30 July, 11 A. M.; G 406. The telegram was drafted by Bethmann himself.

[‡] G 456.

[§] Nicholas II to William II, telegram, 30 July, received 1.45 A. M.; G 390. Comments of William II. For the sending of the telegram, see above, p. 111.

[||] G 368; see above, p. 160.

[¶] Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 30 July, 11.15 A. M.; G 407. Bethmann said that he had asked for "an immediate declaration from Count Berchtold, in order that this episode may be closed in one way or another." The Emperor commented at length on Lichnowsky's telegram. "The worst and most scandalous piece of

He therefore advised the sending of another warning to the Tsar. His Majesty should say:

> Austria has only mobilized against Serbia; if Russia, as has now happened, mobilizes against Austria, then the rôle of mediator which I took upon myself at your request will be endangered if not made impossible. The responsibility for deciding now rests upon you alone.*

Thus, whereas the chancellor twelve hours before had accepted the fact of Russian mobilization with a plea that Russia should not begin operations against Austria-Hungary pending the result of German mediation,† he now reverted to his original position that Russia must not mobilize at all.‡

Nevertheless, he proceeded to give the contrary impression to the British Government. He telegraphed to Prince Lichnowsky:

English pharisaism that I ever saw! I will never enter into a naval convention with such scoundrels. [Evidently he was thinking of Bethmann's proposal of the day before.] . . . We are to leave Austria in the lurch as if we were as common as dirt [*urgemein*] and Mephistophelian! Thoroughly English, however. . . . England reveals herself in her true colors at a moment when she thinks that we are caught in the toils and, so to speak, disposed of! The common crew of shopkeepers has tried to deceive us with dinners and speeches. The crassest deception, the words of the King to Henry for me: 'We shall remain neutral and try to keep out of this as long as possible.' Grey proves the King a liar, and his words to Lichnowsky are the result of a guilty conscience, because even he feels that he has deceived us. . . . He knows perfectly well that if he were to say one single serious, sharp and warning word in Paris and Petersburg and advise them to remain neutral, both would become quiet at once. But he takes care not to speak the word, and threatens us instead! Common cur! England *alone* bears the responsibility for war and peace, not we any longer. That must also be made clear to the world."

* Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 30 July; 11.15 A. M.; G 408. With an eye to the future, Bethmann added: "As this telegram will be a particularly important document historically, I must humbly recommend that Your Majesty do not—so long as Vienna's decision is still outstanding—make use of the expression that Your Majesty's rôle as mediator is already at an end." The Emperor yielded to the chancellor. He drafted a telegram in English which was sent uncoded at 3.30 P. M., after it had been approved by the chancellor. After denying that the language of Pourtalès could have been in contradiction with his own and recalling the previous warnings, he said: "Austria has only mobilized against *Servia* & only a *part* of her army. If, as it is now the case, according to the communication by you & your Government, Russia mobilizes against Austria, my rôle as mediator you kindly entrusted me with, & which I accepted at you[r] express prayer, will be endangered if not ruined. The whole weight of the decision lies solely on you[r] shoulders now, who have to bear the responsibility for peace or war." William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 30 July; G 420. This was the Emperor's official opinion; privately (see preceding footnote), he blamed England.

† See above, p. 166.

‡ See above, p. 8.

> My hope that mediation may still be possible on the basis of the Grey proposal is made doubtful by the Russian mobilization against Austria and by French preparations for war . . . our situation is becoming most critical. A demand by us on France to stop her preparations could hardly be framed otherwise than in the form of an ultimatum. This could be avoided only if Grey succeeds in inducing France to call a halt *at once* to her war-measures. Grey must also act vigorously to secure Russia's acceptance of the terms of his proposal and furthermore to prevent a Russian *advance* against the Austrian frontier.*

To appeal for British pressure to keep Russia from attacking Austria-Hungary while he himself was calling on Russia to stop mobilizing was hardly playing fair with Sir Edward Grey. But to show Grey his full hand would only spoil whatever chances there might be of securing British neutrality. Herr von Bethmann's position was certainly difficult: In the face of his frequent professions of his willingness to co-operate with Great Britain and to mediate, he dared not tell Sir Edward Grey that he was asking Russia to stop mobilizing. Such an admission would ruin any prospects of obtaining British neutrality. The chancellor's conduct was, however, none the less, disingenuous.†

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 11.30 A. M.; G 409. Jagow explained the suggestion to Goschen thus: "Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs says if you can succeed in getting Russia to agree to above basis [Austrian occupation of Belgrade, etc.] for an arrangement and in persuading her in the meantime to take no steps which might be regarded as an act of aggression against Austria, he still sees some chance that European peace may be preserved." Jagow added that "telegram received from Prince Lichnowsky last night contains matter which he had heard with regret, but not exactly with surprise, and at all events he thoroughly appreciated frankness and loyalty with which you had spoken." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 305.

† A little later Prince Henry sent a long telegram to King George V, apparently on his own initiative. The essential passages read: "If you really and earnestly wish to prevent this terrible disaster, may I suggest you using your influence on France and also Russia to keep neutral, which seems to me would be most useful. This I consider a very good, perhaps the only, chance to maintain the peace of Europe. . . . Believe me that William is most sincere in his endeavors to maintain peace, but that the military preparations of his two neighbors may at last force him to follow their example for the safety of his own country, which otherwise would remain defenceless." Prince Henry to King George, telegram, 30 July, 2.15 P. M.; G 417. "Influence on . . . Russia to keep neutral" and action "to prevent a Russian advance against the Austrian frontier" were not quite the same thing.

During the day "endless negotiations" went on between the chancellor and the military authorities.* At noon Herr von Bethmann analyzed the situation to the Prussian council of ministers. Speaking evidently with reference to the discussions of the evening before, he said:

> *His Majesty had agreed that before any further decisions were arrived at, the démarche at Vienna should be brought to a conclusion.* [With reference to] military measures: Proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' meant mobilization, and this, under present conditions—mobilization in both directions—meant war. But political and military activity could not conveniently be carried on at the same time. The decision on the German and English proposals would probably be taken in Vienna to-day. . . .
>
> The military authorities had expressed the desire that 'threatening danger of war' should be proclaimed, but he successfully maintained the above-mentioned objections before His Majesty, and the measures taken had been limited to the military protection of the railways.

He described the military position at the moment thus:

> The Russian Government had explained that Russia's measures of mobilization were not to be compared with those of western Europe; that the Russian troops might stand fast in a state of mobilization for weeks to come; and that Russia did not intend to go to war, but had only been driven to take these measures by the action of Austria. . . .
>
> The measures taken in Russia as well as in France resembled the 'proclamation of threatening danger of war' with us. In Russia, so far as the German frontier was concerned, the frontier guards had been strengthened, and a state of war proclaimed in the government of Kovno. The light houses in the Baltic had been extinguished, and the wireless stations closed. For the rest, Russia had given assurances even early to-day that no mobilization was in progress against Germany.
>
> France had proclaimed a state of war, but taken only preparatory defensive measures. Other rumors could not be controlled.†

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* Zwehl, p. 57.

† Proctocol of the Prussian council of ministers, 30 July; G 456.

This analysis, which was not challenged by General von Falkenhayn, shows that there was not believed to be any immediate danger to Germany from the military measures of Russia and France. Nor does the Austro-Russian situation seem to have caused great anxiety, if we may judge from the telegram sent during the morning by General von Moltke to General Conrad:

> Russian mobilization [*i. e.*, partial mobilization] not yet a reason for [German] mobilization: [the latter] only when a state of war exists between the Monarchy and Russia. In contrast to the customary Russian mobilizations and demobilizations, German mobilization would lead unconditionally to war. Do not declare war on Russia, but await the Russian attack.*

So far, then, as one can see, the only reason why the German military authorities should demand prompt decision on the question of 'threatening danger of war' lay in the Belgian measures which threatened to block the strategic gateway at Liège. In conformity, however, with the chancellor's attitude, no action was proposed or taken at the council with respect to this latter situation. The only step taken, at the request of Admiral von Tirpitz,† was to sanction the proclamation of 'security' [*Sicherung*] for the navy, as this corresponded to the measures taken on land and was purely defensive.‡

Up to this time only the intention of Russia to order partial mobilization had been made known to the German Government. But at 11.50 A. M. a telegram from Count Pourtalès reported the mobilization as a fact.§ It was presumably in consequence of this news that at 1 P. M. Herr von Bethmann sent for Admiral von Tirpitz and General von Falkenhayn; General von Moltke, being informed of this by the minister of war, "appeared uninvited." What took place at this conference is not known. But the Bavarian military attaché learned that "His Majesty the Emperor is decidedly on the side of Moltke and the ministry of war," who were demanding the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war.'* According to Falkenhayn's biographer, Moltke was on this day speaking "more decidedly" for war,† and he is said to have left the foreign office about 2 P. M. in a "very excited" condition.‡ The guess may therefore be ventured that the chief of staff, feeling sure of the Emperor's support, renewed his demand for the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' or perhaps even for mobilization, and was rebuffed by the chancellor.§

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* Conrad, IV, 152; see above, p. 182.

† Although he did not, so far as the minutes show, mention them to the council, Tirpitz was doubtless informed of the telegrams of the naval attaché in London which arrived that morning. One stated that the British First Fleet was probably in the North Sea and that Germany must be on her guard; Groos, p. 21. According to the other, Grey had told Lichnowsky privately that "in case we went to war against France, England would immediately proceed to attack us at sea with her fleet"; comment of William II on G 407.

‡ Protocol of the session, 30 July; G 456. According to Tirpitz, II, 5, the order to institute 'security' was issued at 1.45 P. M., after the approval of the Emperor had been obtained.

§ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, "urgent," 30 July; G 410.

It is by no means impossible that the Emperor had been won over to the point of view of the soldiers. When he read the announcement of the intended Russian partial mobilization on the morning of 30 July, he wrote: "Then I, too, must mobilize."|| As it happens there are several indications to the

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* Wenninger to war office, 30 July; Dirr, p. 226.

† Zwehl, p. 58.

‡ T. von Schäfer, "Generaloberst von Moltke in den Tagen vor die Mobilmachung und seine Einwirkung auf Oesterreich-Ungarn," in *KSF*, IV, 525 (August, 1926), citing the statement of the Austro-Hungarian military attaché, who saw Moltke immediately afterward.

§ At 2 P. M. Zimmermann told the Spanish ambassador that "the military authorities are very anxious that mobilization should be ordered." J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; F 105. F. Charles-Roux, *Trois ambassades françaises à la veille de la guerre* (Paris, 1928), pp. 199–200. Later in the afternoon Jagow told Cambon that "the heads of the army were insisting" on mobilization. J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; G 109. Moltke may have made use of the appeal sent the night before from Vienna for a declaration in St. Petersburg and Paris that Germany would reply to partial mobilization by her own mobilization (see above, p. 177). Szögyény seems to have made the *démarche* at the Wilhelmstrasse sometime during the afternoon (G 427), but Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, IV, 532, note 33, suggests that Moltke may have learned of the request during the morning. His message to Conrad supports this hypothesis.

|| Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 30 July, 6 A. M.; G 399. William read the letter an hour later. The Tsar, he wrote, "expressly stated in his first telegram that he would presumably be forced to take measures that would lead to a European war. . . . Actually, however, the measures were in full swing and he simply lied to me. . . . I regard my mediation as brought to an end, as the Tsar, instead of loyally awaiting its results, had already mobilized behind my back, without letting me know anything about it." On his understanding of the situation, which was justi-

effect that the Emperor may have agreed to mobilization sometime during the morning. (1) It has been stated that at 10 o'clock the Berlin correspondent of the *Neues Wiener Tageblatt* sent a telegram to his paper announcing German mobilization, a piece of news which he obtained from one of the Emperor's adjutants.* (2) The German pamphleteer 'Junius Alter' (supposed to be Dr. Kapp, of *Kapp-Putsch* fame) affirms that Falkenhayn, Moltke and the naval authorities pressed for mobilization, and then says:

> They did succeed on Thursday (30 July) in convincing the Emperor of the unavoidable necessity of this measure, so that at noon the mobilization was already known to the Berlin police and to the *Lokal-Anzeiger,* but the intervention of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg brought it about that the execution of the order was postponed at the last minute.†

These statements are naturally not conclusive. For one thing, they speak of mobilization, whereas according to the testimony of both Bethmann and Falkenhayn, it was not mobilization, but the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' which the soldiers on this day were demanding. On the other hand, since the latter was the preliminary, and the necessary preliminary of the former, confusion between the two was easily possible.‡ Another objection is that there is no record of General von Moltke seeking to obtain the approval of the Em-

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fied by the Tsar's telegrams, the German Emperor's indignation was intelligible. What had actually happened was that the Russian Government had resorted to mobilization against Austria-Hungary only after Germany had repeatedly refused to mediate.

* [R. Puaux], *Le mensonge du 3 août 1914* (Paris, 1917), p. 72: The French ambassador in Vienna reported that "the news of the German mobilization arrived" that day. Dumaine to Viviani, 30 July; F 104.

† 'Junius Alter,' *Das deutsche Reich auf dem Wege zur geschichtlichen Episode* (Berlin, 1919), p. 34. The French ambassador in Berlin telegraphed: "Rumor has it that mobilization was decided upon by the council of ministers this morning and will probably be published to-morrow. At the foreign office the newspaper correspondents were informed that the rumors could neither be confirmed nor denied, but that serious decisions had been taken." J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July, 2.30 P. M.; Bourgeois and Pagès, p. 44. The protocol of the session (G 456) shows that the rumor was quite unfounded.

‡ Apparently even the Bavarian minister-president was confused, for he told the Austrian minister in Munich that "on the basis of the report of the actual mobiliza-

peror. But it is certainly possible that William, having learned of the Russian partial mobilization and decided that "I, too, must mobilize," let his opinion be known. In other words, the stories, while not authenticated, may be true.

During the afternoon of 30 July two extraordinary incidents occurred, the one known at the time, the other not revealed until long after the war. The first incident was the issue, at about 2 P. M., of an extra edition of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* announcing German mobilization. It read:

> The decision, which the reports of the last few hours compelled us to expect, has been made. We learn that the Emperor William has just ordered the immediate mobilization of the German army and navy.
>
> Germany's action is the imperative reply that she is forced to make to Russia's threatening military preparations, which, under the prevailing conditions, are directed against ourselves no less than against our ally Austria-Hungary.

The Russian ambassador, informed of this by a Russian telegraph agency in Berlin, promptly transmitted the news to his government.* But a few minutes later he was informed by both the telegraph agency and the foreign office that the news was incorrect, and this he relayed to St. Petersburg in two telegrams, the one coded, the other uncoded.†

Various theories have been advanced to explain this incident. One is that the German general staff circulated the news with the object of precipitating Russian general mobilization, which would provide the excuse for war,‡ and that the German Gov-

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tion in Russia, the Berlin general staff had already yesterday asked for similar measures in Germany. Mobilization of the army and navy would be announced here to-day by extra editions of the newspapers." Velics to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July, 4.30 P. M.; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,072. But the reports of the Bavarian minister and military attaché in Berlin spoke of the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' rather than of mobilization.

* Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July, 3.20 P. M.; R 61.

† Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July, 4.30 P. M.; R 62. The uncoded telegram was also sent at 4.30 P. M.; the reason for the delay is not evident.

‡ It seems to have been first put forward in 1916 by Grey in a speech to the press. But curiously enough, the German chancellor was aware at the time of the possible effects of the incident. "I do not consider it impossible," he said, "that

ernment held up the later telegrams of the Russian ambassador. There is no proof whatsoever of any such Machiavellian policy on the part of the German general staff, and the charge that the telegrams were held up is without foundation.* Actually, the incident had no effect on the decisions of the Russian Government in the matter of mobilization, as will be seen in the next chapter.†

A well-informed German writer has suggested that the incident was a trick resorted to by the soldiers to force the hand of the 'long Theobald,' as they called the German chancellor. It was their hope, he thinks, that the popular enthusiasm let loose by the news would overwhelm Herr von Bethmann and that the report, when it reached Paris, would cause the French Government to order mobilization.‡ The hypothesis is interesting, for French mobilization would enable General von Moltke to demand war at once and proceed against Liège. But again there is no proof.

The most recent explanation ascribes the incident to a combination of journalistic enterprise and carelessness. During the morning of 30 July, the *Lokal-Anzeiger* was informed from St. Petersburg that general mobilization had been ordered by the Tsar. The Wilhelmstrasse, on being consulted, said that it also had received such reports,§ but that official confirmation was lacking; it informed the newspaper, however, that if the re-

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the Russian mobilization can be traced to rumors rife here yesterday—absolutely false and at once officially denied, but reported to St. Petersburg as fact—that mobilization was taking place here." Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, 31 July; G 488. The Bavarian minister was told at the foreign office that "the dice were set rolling by the fact that the Russian ambassador Sverbeyev had reported the false news of the *Lokal-Anzeiger* that Germany was mobilizing, without having assured himself of its correctness. It is assumed that the *démenti* with which he followed his report was inadequate, because the ambassador would not admit his mistake frankly." Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 31 July; Dirr, p. 174.

* Sverbeyev's first telegram, though handed in to a branch post office at 3.20 P. M., was not, owing to various interruptions of service, actually put on the wires until 6 P. M. His second and third messages, handed in at 4.30, were despatched by way of Warsaw at 5.27 and 5.37.

† R. Grelling, "Le mystère du 30 juillet 1914," in *Revue de Paris*, XXIX, ii, 29–69 (1 March, 1922). Graf M. Montgelas, "Der Zusammenbruch der Entente-Legende über die russische Mobilmachung," in *Deutsche Rundschau*, XCCI, 113–124 (May, 1922).

‡ Fischer, *Die kritischen 39 Tage*, p. 221.

§ Cf. *Russlands Mobilmachung für den Weltkrieg*, pp. 28–29.

port were true, German mobilization would have to be ordered. The *Lokal-Anzeiger* thereupon decided to prepare for the event and had 2,000 copies of an extra edition printed. But through a misunderstanding on the part of an employee, the sheets were released for distribution, and about 150 copies were circulated in front of the Wolff Telegraph Bureau, where one was secured by the representative of the Russian telegraph agency.* This may well be true. But the fact that later in the day the Berlin correspondent of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* telegraphed to his paper that "the mobilization of the German army will probably follow early to-morrow (that is, Friday)"† and that four other Berlin papers said to be in close touch with military circles also published reports of mobilization‡ is significant.

This affair of the *Lokal-Anzeiger* had no practical effect. Not so the other incident of the afternoon. When General von Moltke left the foreign office after his conference with Herr von Bethmann, he sent for Lieutenant-Colonel Baron von Bienerth, the Austro-Hungarian military attaché. In a telegram to General Conrad, the attaché reported the chief of the German general staff as speaking thus:

> He considers the situation critical unless the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy mobilizes *at once* against Russia. The declaration made by Russia concerning her mobilization makes counter-measures necessary on the part of Austria-Hungary, which must also be pointed out in the official explanation. The *casus foederis* will thereby be created for Germany [*Dadurch wäre Bündnisfall für Deutschland gegeben*]. Every hour of delay makes the situation worse, for Russia gains a start.—Bring about an honorable compromise with Italy by promising her adequate compensation, so that Italy will remain an active mem-

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* A. von Wegerer, "Das Extrablatt des *Lokal-Anzeigers*," in *KSF*, VII, 1039–1040 (November, 1929).

† *Ibid.*, 1046–1048. In its morning issue of 31 July, the paper insisted that its information had come from "one of the most authoritative quarters."

‡ A. von Wegerer, "Die verfrühten deutschen Mobilmachungsmeldungen und die russische Mobilmaching," in *Die Grenzboten*, LXXXI, 83 (6 May, 1922). According to [Puaux], *Le mensonge du 3 août 1914*, p. 68, the four papers were the *Berliner Neueste Nachrichten*, *Deutsche Zeitung*, *Deutsche Tageszeitung* and *Deutsche Warte*. They published reports of the mobilization of three German army corps on the eastern frontier; they are said to have employed a joint news-service.

> ber of the Triple Alliance; do not leave a single man on the Italian frontier. Decline the renewed advances of Great Britain for the maintenance of peace. A European war offers the last chance of preserving Austria-Hungary. Unconditional support of Germany [*Deutschland geht unbedingt mit*].*

The military advice was entirely sound, for unless Austria-Hungary ordered general mobilization, she would be caught unprepared for a Russian attack in Galicia. But from a political point of view, the message (1) ran counter to the advice of the German chancellor, who had urged Count Berchtold to accept the British proposal, and (2) announced to General Conrad the imminence of a general European war. Sometime later, probably during the night, General von Moltke followed up his statement to the military attaché by a personal telegram to General Conrad:

> Stand fast against Russian mobilization [*Russische Mobilisierung durchhalten*]. Austria-Hungary must remain preserved, mobilize at once against Russia. Germany will mobilize. Compel Italy by means of compensations to [fulfil] her duty as ally.†

It is commonly assumed that these telegrams were sent behind the back of the chancellor, and certainly the advice to Vienna to reject the British proposal threatened to play havoc with Bethmann's plan to get that proposal accepted in order to throw upon Russia the responsibility for the war; there is nothing in the published record to show that the chancellor knew of Moltke's action. But there is another aspect of the matter to consider. Moltke's statement that the Russian mobilization and the subsequent Austro-Hungarian general mobilization would create the *casus foederis* for Germany, though in strict accordance with his agreements with Conrad, was premature, in the sense that Bethmann had thus far refused his consent to the military measures necessary to make Moltke's promise effective; or, to put it in another way, the chief of staff was taking it upon himself to determine the time and circumstances of mobilization. Consequently many writers have looked upon this step of Moltke as a stab in the back of the chancellor, as an effort to prevent the success of Bethmann's policy of peace which depended on getting a concession from Berchtold; and this may have been Moltke's purpose. But the chief of staff was not the subordinate of the chancellor; the two occupied the same status before the Emperor, who had to decide between them in case of difference. Nor was Moltke an undisciplined person accustomed to go his own way. What seems probable therefore is that Moltke sent his message to Conrad in the knowledge that the Emperor agreed with him that the time had come to take serious military measures, that is, the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' which would be followed by mobilization.

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* Conrad, IV, 152; Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, IV, 525. The telegram was sent at 5.30 P. M., and arrived in Vienna at 9.50, after Francis Joseph, Berchtold and Conrad had decided in principle on general mobilization. Szögyény informed Berchtold that Moltke had advised general mobilization. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July, 7.40 P. M.; A III 34.

† Conrad, IV, 152. The telegram was received in Vienna at 7.45 A. M. on 31 July. According to Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, IV, 536, the telegram has not been found in the Berlin or Vienna archives, nor in Conrad's papers; but it is apparently referred to in a memorandum of Conrad's adjutant.

As a matter of fact, there is evidence to show that the supposed difference between the chancellor and the chief of staff was greatly diminished during the day. According to Falkenhayn's biographer, "Falkenhayn and Moltke finally got it settled that a decision on the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' must be made by noon the next day at the latest."* He does not indicate at what time of the day this was arranged; but the Bavarian military attaché, telegraphing at 5.30 P. M., said:

> If Vienna declines to-day the German proposal of mediation, state of 'threatening danger of war' will follow even to-day and then mobilization.†

This seems to indicate that the chancellor accepted the position of the generals sometime during the afternoon. But whatever the exact hour of agreement, the conclusion is unescapable that the decision for war—since according to Bethmann's own statement at the council of Prussian ministers, "declaration of 'threatening danger of war' meant mobilization, and mobilization . . . meant war"—was made on 30 July, on the basis of the Russian partial mobilization and at least twelve hours before news was received of Russian general mobilization.* Moreover, the military measures were to be taken even if Vienna declined the proposal of mediation: whereas on the previous evening Herr von Bethmann had threatened to denounce the alliance if the proposal were not accepted. Either the chancellor's threat was not seriously meant, or he had changed his mind since making it.

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* Zwehl, pp. 57–58.

† Wenninger to war office, telegram, 30 July; Dirr, p. 223.

The same conclusions may be deduced from the diplomatic action of the German Government on the afternoon and evening of 30 July.

Word had come from St. Petersburg that M. Sazonov did not consider the Austro-Hungarian declaration of disinterestedness, upon which Germany had based her argument for localization, as sufficient: "Russia's vital interests demanded also that . . . Serbia should not sink to the level of a vassal of Austria by accepting demands which infringed on her sovereign rights."† But to the chancellor's plea that Russia should not begin operations against Austria pending German mediation,* the Russian foreign minister had responded with a conciliatory gesture. At the request of the German ambassador he had stated his demands in a formula which at least offered the possibility of negotiation:

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* The following extract from the regimental history of the 1st Jäger Battalion is of considerable interest. "It was a relief to every one from the company commander to the youngest rifleman when on 30 July the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Modrow, suddenly paraded the battalion in the barrack square, announced the state of 'threatening danger of war,' and in glowing words reminded the officers, N.C.O.'s, and men of their oath and their duty to their country. With heavy heart, he at the same time bade farewell to the battalion. He was entrusted with the command of the 59th Reserve Infantry Regiment. Major Weigelt succeeded him in command of the battalion. The companies were on the spot clothed and equipped for war. Every man received 150 rounds of ammunition. . . . In exactly two hours the battalion was ready to march off. . . . The four companies marched about 2 P. M. to occupy the line of obstacles which ran parallel to the frontier, a few kilometres east of Ortelsburg, through the thick woods, and was intended in case of war to offer the first resistance to the Russian advanced troops. . . . The machine-gun company and the cyclist company remained in Ortelsburg in alarm quarters at the disposal of the battalion commander. Here, as in the blockhouse line in front, an ever increasing state of nervous tension soon made itself felt." E. Balla, *Im Yorckschen Geist* (Berlin, 1926), pp. 5–6. 'Threatening danger of war' was not officially proclaimed until the next day, 31 July.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 12.13 P. M.; G 412.

> If Austria, recognizing that its conflict with Serbia has assumed the character of a question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum those points which infringe on the sovereign rights of Serbia, Russia agrees to stop all military preparations.†

This proposal put the German chancellor in a tight place. It offered him a means of stopping the Russian mobilization and of securing a lever with which to resist the pressure of the German general staff; one might have supposed that he would grasp it eagerly if he desired the maintenance of peace. Also not to adopt it was bound to irritate Russia still further and to diminish greatly the chances of putting her in the wrong. But the Russian contention that the Serbian question was European had never been accepted by the German Government, not even when it recommended to Vienna the plan of the *'Halt in Belgrad'*; to adopt it now would signify diplomatic defeat and would require the severest kind of pressure on Vienna. The dilemma was real, and there may have been hesitation. But Herr von Jagow told the Russian ambassador late in the evening that the proposal was "unacceptable" to Austria (although Vienna was not consulted), because "the Habsburg Monarchy could not *humiliate itself and deal a blow to its prestige*."‡

Possibly the chancellor was guided in his decision by the encouraging reply from London to his *démarche* of the morning.§ Sir Edward Grey assured Prince Lichnowsky that "the French are using all their influence in St. Petersburg in the interest of a peaceful outcome,"* and himself promised to speak to Count Benckendorff on the subject of Russian preparations.† More than that, he had telegraphed to St. Petersburg urging acceptance of the *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan, and, at Lichnowsky's request, had omitted reference to the Austrian ultimatum.‡ Thus, in spite of Grey's admission that "the British fleet has just sailed along the east coast toward Scottish harbors"§ and of news from both Rome and Paris that England was expected to participate in the war on the side of Russia and France,‖ the British foreign secretary was actually using his influence, which he had hitherto declined to do, to restrain Russia.

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* See above, p. 166.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 3.32 P. M.; G 421.

‡ Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; R 63. Sverbeyev to Sazonov, final report; Schilling, p. 68. The conversation took place about 10.30 P. M.

§ See above, pp. 188–189.

The more probable explanation, however, of the summary refusal to discuss the Russian formula is that on the evening of 30 July the German Government had decided to force the situation.¶ The circumstances in which this decision was reached are not altogether clear, but from the somewhat fragmentary evidence it is possible to reconstruct the probable course of events.

Between 5 and 6 P. M. three telegrams arrived from Herr von Tschirschky which at last revealed the attitude of the Austrian Government to the German suggestions of the night before. It came to this: While Count Berchtold was ready to assure Russia that "the Monarchy has no intentions of making any territorial acquisitions in Serbia . . . and after the conclusion of peace, intends to occupy Serbian territory only temporarily," in order to secure the fulfillment of its demands, he refused to discuss the Austro-Serbian quarrel with Russia. An answer to the *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan could be given only after consultation with the Emperor and Count Tisza, that is, not until noon the next day.* But as the demands contained in the ultimatum—which the *'Halt in Belgrad'* was intended to enforce—were declared no longer sufficient, that proposal was not likely to be accepted.†

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* So Grey had been informed by the French ambassador in London; B 294.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 5.56 P. M.; G 435.

‡ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 8.45 P. M.; G 439. Grey subsequently gave Lichnowsky a copy of the telegram to Buchanan (B 309), which the ambassador transmitted to Berlin; G 460.

§ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 438. Grey said, however, that "no mobilization preparations preliminary to an announcement of 'strained relations' by the foreign office had yet been made," and that the French were taking only precautionary measures.

‖ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 414. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 430.

¶ During the afternoon, the long despatch addressed two days before to the Prussian ministers at the other German courts (G 307; see above, p. 124), which stated the case for the Austro-Hungarian policy and announced Germany's intention to support it, was sent to Rome (Quirinal), Brussels, The Hague, Sofia and Mexico, and on the following day to many other posts abroad. The German representatives were evidently being prepared for the rupture.

Confronted by this situation on the one hand and by the necessity—as it would seem—of sanctioning by noon the next day the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' Herr von Bethmann prepared to renew his pressure on Vienna to adopt the Anglo-German plan of a *'Halt in Belgrad.'* First he had the Emperor telegraph to Francis Joseph that he [William] did not "feel able to refuse the personal plea of the Tsar" for mediation and had therefore "had proposals submitted yesterday and today" to the Vienna Cabinet. "I should be sincerely grateful to you," he concluded, "if you would let me have your decision as soon as possible."‡ If this was rather mild language to use in so urgent a business, it must be remembered that William II cherished a great respect for Francis Joseph and that a peremptory tone was likely to be resented; an appeal from Count Berchtold to his master was a sufficient indication of German anxiety.

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* The necessity of consulting Tisza was reported by telephone; G 440, 441.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegrams, 30 July; G 432, 433, 434.

‡ William II to Francis Joseph, telegram, 30 July, 7.15 P. M.; G 437; A III 49, A. The telegram was received at 8.10 P. M., that is, after it had been decided to answer the British proposal courteously, but to avoid an acceptance; see above, p. 183. At the moment of sending this telegram, the German Emperor was in the highest state of excitement and indignation. "I have no doubt left," he wrote at 7 P. M. on Pourtalès's report of his midnight interview with Sazonov (G 401), "that England, Russia and France have *agreed* among themselves—after arranging to have the *casus foederis* arise for us through Austria—to utilize the Austro-Serbian conflict as an *excuse* for waging a war of annihilation against us. Hence Grey's cynical remark to Lichnowsky, 'as long as the war is confined to Russia and Austria, England would sit quiet, but if we and France *mixed into it* he would be compelled to take active steps against us ['], *i. e.*, either we are shamefully to betray our allies and *sacrifice* them to Russia—thereby breaking up the Triple Alliance, or we are to be attacked by the Triple Entente in common for our *fidelity to our allies* and punished, whereby they will satisfy their jealousy by joining in totally *ruining* us. That is the real naked situation *in nuce* which, slowly and surely woven by Edward VII, has been carried on and systematically developed by means of the conversa-

The chancellor followed this with a strong protest of his own to Count Berchtold:

> If Vienna . . . refuses every concession and especially, declines the last proposal of Grey, it will hardly be possible any longer to place the blame for the European war on Russia's shoulders. His Majesty undertook intervention at Vienna at the request of the Tsar because he could not refuse to do so without creating the incontrovertible suspicion that we desired war. The success of this intervention is of course rendered difficult by the fact that Russia has mobilized against Austria. This we have announced to-day to England, adding that we had already suggested to Paris and St. Petersburg in friendly fashion the stopping of French and Russian measures for war, so that we could take a new step in this direction only through an ultimatum, which would mean war. Therefore we have put it up to Sir Edward Grey that he on his side should speak energetically in this sense in Paris and St. Petersburg, and have just received through Lichnowsky his assurances to this effect. If England's efforts succeed, while Vienna declines everything, Vienna will be giving documentary proof that it absolutely wishes war, into which we shall be drawn, while Russia remains free of responsibility. That would place us in the eyes of our own people in an untenable position. Therefore we can only urgently advise Austria to accept the proposal of Grey, which preserves her status in every way.

Herr von Tschirschky was to speak "at once and most em-

tions (which are denied) of England with Paris and St. Petersburg, and finally brought to a conclusion by George V and set in motion. The stupidity and ineptitude of our ally is thereby turned into a snare for us. So the famous '*encirclement*' [*Einkreisung*] of Germany has now finally become an accomplished fact, despite every effort of our politicians and diplomatists to prevent it. The net has been suddenly thrown over our head, and England sneeringly reaps the most brilliant success of the purely *anti-German world policy*, which she has persistently pursued and against which we have shown ourselves helpless, as she twists the noose of our political and economic destruction out of our loyalty to Austria while we squirm *isolated* in the net. A brilliant achievement which arouses the admiration even of him who is to be destroyed as a result! Edward VII is stronger after his death than I who am still alive. . . . This whole business must now be ruthlessly disclosed and the mask of Christian peacefulness publicly and brusquely torn from its face in public, and the pharisaical hypocrisy exposed on the pillory! ! And our consuls in Turkey, and India, agents, etc., must inflame the whole Mohammedan world to fierce rebellion against this hated, lying, conscienceless nation of shopkeepers, for if we are to bleed to death, then England shall at least lose India."

phatically" to Count Berchtold and perhaps also to Count Tisza.* The language was not so sharp as that of the night before, when Bethmann had threatened to repudiate the alliance, for he once more made it his principal concern to throw the responsibility on Russia. But since the *démarche* did definitely advise a concession, it gives the appearance of real pressure. The telegram was sent at 9 P. M.

It was accompanied, however, by another telegram of a rather different tenor. During the afternoon, Count Szögyény had visited Herr von Jagow to present the proposal of his government that Germany should join with Austria-Hungary in a declaration, "in a friendly manner," at St. Petersburg and Paris to the effect that "the continuation of Russian mobilization would have to be followed by counter-measures in Germany and Austria, which must lead to serious consequences."† The secretary of state replied to the ambassador:

> We could not participate in the *démarche* at St. Petersburg, since during the last few days we have already spoken "in a friendly manner" in this sense and could not do it again. A new statement from us could only be an ultimatum. Austria must make the *démarche* alone.‡

This reply was communicated to Herr von Tschirschky at the same time as the instruction to renew the pressure on Count Berchtold for the acceptance of the *'Halt in Belgrad.'*§ The two do not seem to be consistent. One telegram advised the Cabinet of Vienna to make a concession to Russia; the other sanctioned a communication to Russia which had been proposed because Austria-Hungary "will not allow herself to be deterred from her warlike action against Serbia," and would, even if effected "in a friendly manner," be a notification that no concessions would be made. For tactical reasons the German Government was unwilling to join in this declaration, but it raised no objection to the step if its ally chose to take it. Which of the two messages to Vienna reflected the real attitude of Berlin can be best determined from the subsequent course of events.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, "urgent," 30 July; G 441.

† Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 29 July; A III 1; Szögyény to German foreign office, 30 July; G 427. See above, p. 177.

‡ Jagow's note on G 429.

§ Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July, 9 P. M.; G 442.

At 11.20 P. M., Herr von Tschirschky was instructed not to carry out "for the present" his instructions to secure acceptance of the '*Halt in Belgrad.*'* Why did the chancellor change his mind?† As it happens, he has provided two explanations. The first was that he had cancelled the instructions

> because the general staff just informs me that the military preparations of our neighbors, especially in the east, will force us to a speedy decision, unless we wish to expose ourselves to the danger of surprise.‡

But he did not communicate this to Tschirschky. Instead he informed the ambassador that he had cancelled the instructions "in consideration of a telegram from the King of England to Prince Henry," which he repeated and asked to have "communicated" to Count Berchtold.§

The telegram of King George was in reply to that sent by Prince Henry at noon.‖ After saying that he was "so pleased to hear of William's efforts to concert with Nicky to maintain peace," the King continued:

> My Government is doing its utmost suggesting to Russia

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 30 July; G 450.

† At 10.05 P. M. a telegram was received from Rome, according to which San Giuliano "is very much alarmed by the news that the direct negotiations between Austria and Russia have been interrupted. There was no longer any question that Russia is ready for war and that England will take part in it. . . . It was absolutely necessary for the Imperial Government to get in touch with Vienna, not in order to persuade Austria to yield but only to make certain of the intentions and demands of Austria. Then the other Powers, principally England, but also Italy, could negotiate at St. Petersburg on this basis, in order to avoid a European war." Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 446.

‡ Draft of a telegram, not sent, to Tschirschky, 30 July; G 451.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 31 July, 2.45 A. M.; G 464.

‖ See above, p. 189.

and France to suspend further military preparations, if Austria will consent to be satisfied with occupation of Belgrade and neighbouring Serbian territory as a hostage for satisfactory settlement of her demands, other countries meanwhile suspending their war preparations. Trust William will use his great influence to induce Austria to accept his proposal,* thus proving that Germany and England are working together to prevent what would be an international catastrophe. Pray assure William I am doing and shall continue to do all that lies in my power to preserve peace of Europe.†

It is just barely possible that this telegram, received *en clair* at the Berlin telegraph office at 11.08 P. M., could have been sent to the foreign office and read by the chancellor before he cancelled the instructions to Tschirschky at 11.20 P. M. But even so, what was there in the King's telegram to warrant the order to Tschirschky? Absolutely nothing, so far as one can see. Unless the telegram inspired the notion that British pressure would be so effective on Russia and France that Austria-Hungary would not have to make any concessions! (?) If so—this is of course sheer speculation—it was a most dangerous game to play, and Bethmann must have known it, quite apart from a final warning from Prince Lichnowsky that in the opinion of London, the "only peaceful solution" lay in the acceptance of Sir Edward Grey's proposal.‡ That a *démarche* in Vienna should be countermanded because a telegram had come in from England which would strengthen that *démarche,* is so unconvincing that this alleged reason simply cannot be accepted. It is more reasonable to believe that, as Bethmann said frankly in his unsent telegram to

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* At this point the German Emperor noted, in English: "Austria has this evening made the same proposals." He evidently had in mind Tschirschky's telegram of that afternoon (G 433), on which he had noted: "Thus my proposal practically accepted and treated as I telegraphed it to the Tsar." See above, p. 178.

† George V to Prince Henry, telegram, in English, 30 July; G 452.

‡ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 10.25 P. M.; G 447. At midnight another telegram was received stating that Asquith and Grey had "emphasized the great seriousness of the situation" in Parliament and had appealed for "a united front," the Home Rule Amendment Bill being dropped. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 454.

Tschirschky, he yielded to the representations of the general staff.

The news received during 30 July of Russian military preparations was a mixture of the certain and the vague. At noon the definite information was that the four southern districts had been mobilized, but that "except for the mobilization of the fleet, no reservists have been called up for the military districts of Warsaw, Vilna and St. Petersburg."* In the afternoon a longish report from Warsaw indicated great military activity in Poland: "the troops to operate against Germany are collecting along the Niemen between Lomza and Kovno," and "the Vistula railway is to be mobilized tomorrow."† According to the reports of the general staff, cash was being withdrawn into the interior, there were increased movements of troops, especially of cavalry, toward the frontier, traces of mobilization were observable in the Vilna and St. Petersburg districts, and mobilization was believed to be imminent in Warsaw.‡

All this was doubtless utilized by the general staff to reinforce its plea for German military measures. On the other hand, while Sazonov had "undoubtedly convinced His Majesty [the Tsar] that a retreat is no longer possible," General von Chelius reported that "in club [*i. e.,* conservative] circles, where people are quite friendly disposed, they hope for an agreement between Germany and Russia" to protect Serbia against too severe punishment. High officers repeated that "it was a long step between the commencement of mobilization and the beginning of war, which interval might still be made use of for negotiations in the interests of peace."

> I have the impression [the general concluded] that they have mobilized here from a dread of coming events without

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, "urgent," 30 July; received 11.50 A. M.; G 410.

† Bruck to Bethmann-Hollweg, 29 July; G 422.

‡ *Russlands Mobilmachung für den Weltkrieg*, pp. 25–30.

any aggressive intentions and are now terrified by what they have done.*

On this last statement, William II noted: "Correct. That is so."

From the French side there were reports of reservists being called up for frontier units, of military occupation of three frontier posts, of continued preparations on the railways. The frontier was being closely guarded, and it was suspected that the covering troops—eleven infantry and three cavalry divisions—had been ordered into position, which could be done independently of the order for mobilization.†

Such was the situation when Herr von Bethmann, pressed from all sides for mediation at Vienna, sent his first telegram to Herr von Tschirschky. The general staff, it is said, learned that the telegram had been sent. They protested. If the Austro-Hungarian Government yielded to the German pressure, it might delay still longer with its general mobilization, and the German mobilization could not follow. These views were communicated to Herr Zimmermann, and he put the soldiers' case before the chancellor. Successfully: the instructions to Herr von Tschirschky were cancelled.‡ Herr von Jagow telegraphed to the ambassador in Paris: "Departure of Germans advisable"§—an inexplicable step unless the die had been cast for war.

But the chancellor could not overcome his desire, which was natural enough, to place the responsibility on Russia. So he presently relayed the telegram of King George to Vienna as a final move in his effort to represent Germany as co-operating with Great Britain for the maintenance of peace. It is worth noting that he did not demand the acceptance of the British proposal: "Your Excellency [Tschirschky] will communicate the telegram to Count Berchtold without delay."* Another case of "passing on"!

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* Chelius to William II, telegram, 30 July, received 10.05 P. M.; G 445.

† *Deutschland Schuldig?* no. 7, Anlage 2.

‡ So Fischer, pp. 224–225. It is also to be remembered that Moltke, in his statement to Bienerth for transmission to Conrad (see above, p. 197), had urged the rejection of the British proposal.

§ Jagow to Schoen, telegram, 21 July; 1.30 A. M.; G 461. This was in reply to an inquiry from the ambassador whether the return of men liable to military service was not advisable. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 455.

Now if there was to be war, German military interests required that it come as soon as possible. In the west there was the situation at Liège. In the east, it was essential for General Conrad to know by 1 August whether he must convert his partial mobilization to a general mobilization. There was no time to lose. Accordingly, the decision was taken in Berlin to present an ultimatum to Russia. On this point there is the following evidence:

(1) Count Berchtold, writing to the Emperor Francis Joseph on 31 July, said:

> Early to-day [*heute früh*] Herr von Tschirschky informed us, on the basis of a telephonic communication from Berlin, that the imperial chancellor [Bethmann] intends to address an ultimatum to Russia immediately to stop her mobilization.†

(2) General Conrad records, under date of 31 July:

> On the morning of 31 July the ministry of foreign affairs informed me that Germany would present an ultimatum to Russia on account of her military preparations.‡

Nothing further is known of this telephonic conversation between the German ambassador in Vienna and his government. Herr von Stumm, the director of the political department of the German foreign office in 1914, has stated that at about 12.30 P. M. on 31 July, he informed the embassy in Vienna by telephone that on account of the Russian general mobilization, the news of which had just been received, Germany would address an ultimatum to Russia.§ It has therefore been argued that Count Berchtold must have been in error when he said that Tschirschky had made his communication "early to-day." Of course, it is possible that Count Berchtold was mistaken, but he goes on to inform the Emperor of the ministerial council held "before the middle of the day" [*vormittags*], as if "early to-day" signified an earlier hour. Furthermore he does not state that Tschirschky received his information "early to-day," but only that he communicated it at that time. The ambassador could very well have talked with Berlin during the night and with some other person than Herr von Stumm.*

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 31 July, 2.45 A. M.; G 454.

† Berchtold to Francis Joseph, 31 July; A III 80.

‡ Conrad, IV, 152.

§ A. von Wegerer, "Die russische allgemeine Mobilmachung und das deutsche Ultimatum an Russland," in *KSF*, VI, 1061–1064 (November, 1928).

(3) Quite apart from these Austrian statements, there is German evidence in support of the view that an ultimatum to Russia had been determined upon. At 11.15 A. M., on 31 July, the Bavarian minister in Berlin telephoned to Munich:

> If Austria should agree to the German and English proposal of mediation, it will be telegraphed to the Tsar, over the head of Sazonov, and at the same time an ultimatum will be presented demanding the stoppage of the mobilization.†

It can of course be argued that the idea behind such an ultimatum, following an Austro-Hungarian acceptance of the *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan, was the maintenance of peace, not the precipitation of war; but one cannot easily believe that Herr von Bethmann, though no doubt he did not *desire* war, hoped by such a step to prevent it. Had that been his main purpose, he would not have cancelled the urgent instructions to Herr von Tschirschky. The formula of M. Sazonov received that afternoon had stated clearly the conditions on which Russia would suspend her military preparations, and the German chancellor had rejected it. Russia might, under pressure from both Germany and Great Britain, accept the *'Halt in Belgrad'* plan. But she would hardly do so if at the same time she were compelled to demobilize, for she would then have no guarantee that Austria-Hungary would content herself with the occupation of Belgrade and the enforcement of her ultimatum.

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* Cf. H. Kanner, "Das deutsche Ultimatum an Russland," in *Der Krieg* (Berlin), I, 171–173 (December, 1928); II, 41–43 (March, 1929).

† Lerchenfeld to foreign office, telegram (previously telephoned), 31 July; Dirr, p. 170.

If we consider all the events of this tempestuous day, more particularly those of the evening hours, we can only conclude that Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg finally accepted General von Moltke's estimate of the situation and acted accordingly. If the chancellor were working for peace, the obvious course for him was to redouble his efforts to secure concessions from Vienna which would either give a chance for negotiations or else place the responsibility for war on Russia. If the preparations of Russia were really alarming, then there was even greater need to put Austria-Hungary in the right—which would not have prevented Germany from taking whatever counter-measures were necessary. Herr von Bethmann tacitly recognized this when in the small hours of 31 July he sent on to Vienna the King of England's telegram. But the very half-heartedness with which he did so is his own condemnation.

From the military point of view, however, General von Moltke was justified in demanding the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war.' Not only was such a step the logical reply to the military measures which Russia was taking in Poland and the Baltic provinces; Moltke's promises to Conrad bound him, in the event of a Russian mobilization against Austria-Hungary, to effect German mobilization. One must, therefore, sympathize not a little with the chief of the German general staff in his dealings with the distracted chancellor, who, though convinced that war was inevitable, would not face the military consequences of his political blunders, and it is not surprising that Moltke used every means in his power to obtain a clearing up of the situation. As a soldier he did what seemed to him his paramount duty.

At the same time political as well as military considerations entered into his actions as well as into the chancellor's. Between 12 and 1 A. M. on 31 July, he talked with Major von

Haeften, of the general staff. He was, says the major, "in very serious mood," expecting that Russia and France would attack Germany forthwith, for he had received two reliable reports of Russian general mobilization. [This was quite possible, for, as the next chapter will show, the Russian mobilization had been ordered at 6 P. M. and the order was received in Warsaw at 8.15.] Only "a miracle," he said, could now prevent war.

> Germany could now purchase peace only by a hard national humiliation, for any negotiation under the pressure of Russian mobilization is synonymous with national humiliation.

To this observation Haeften replied that "any hesitation or weakening would be treachery to the Fatherland, our people are too proud to accept humiliation." Moltke went on to say that "to-morrow at noon [he meant that same day, 31 July] the decision for peace or war would be made." He, the chancellor and the minister of war were to have an audience of the Emperor, and he was waiting for a third report of the Russian mobilization, which he expected in the morning, along with the news of Austro-Hungarian mobilization, in order to justify the German mobilization. "Scarcely a glimmer of hope was left for the maintenance of peace."*

No one will contest the statement of General von Moltke that if Germany delayed with her mobilization in order to give time for negotiations and those negotiations failed, "Germany's entrance into the war would occur in the most unfavorable circumstances imaginable," for her enemies would have had time to carry on their mobilization quietly, perhaps to a conclusion. But were the negotiations bound to fail, "as is to be anticipated"? No one can say. The point is that General von Moltke, and, one suspects, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg, preferred war to such concessions as would prevent the negotiations from failing. Their attitude is intelligible, but it is clear that they recognized an alternative to immediate war.

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* *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 September, 1917, reprinted in R. Puaux, *Les études de la guerre*, cahier 8 (Paris, 1918), p. 666, and F. Schulthess, *Europäischer Geschichtskalender* (Munich, 1917), pp. 996–997.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GENERAL MOBILIZATION, 31 JULY

At the conference between the Emperor Francis Joseph, Count Berchtold, and Generals Conrad and Krobatin on the evening of 30 July, it had been decided in principle to reject the British proposal and to order general mobilization; but these decisions required the consent of the Austrian and Hungarian Governments, which could not be secured until the next day, 31 July. During the night the telegram from Lieutenant-Colonel von Bienerth, the attaché in Berlin, arrived and was deciphered. At 7.45 the next morning, came Moltke's personal telegram to Conrad.*

Armed with these precious documents Conrad proceeded to the foreign office, where he found Berchtold, Stürgkh, and Tisza, the three men in whose hands the final decisions now rested. When the chief of staff read out his messages, Count Berchtold exclaimed, "Who rules? Moltke or Bethmann?"† and himself read the telegram of the Emperor William to the Emperor Francis Joseph. The minister answered his own question:

> I have asked you to come here because I had the impression that Germany was weakening; but now I have received the most reassuring declaration from the most competent authority.‡

Just as early in July the Austro-Hungarian Government did not finally settle its policy toward Serbia until the approval of Germany had been obtained, so now, at the supreme moment, the voice of the chief of the German general staff strengthened the Cabinet of Vienna in its determination to refuse all concessions and to try the arbitrament of war.

The ministers agreed then and there to order general mobilization, and to order it that day instead of the next, 1 August. The telegram which Conrad had drafted the night before* was sent to Moltke, Count Berchtold telegraphed the news to the ambassador in Berlin,† and General von Krobatin went to get the Emperor's signature to the order. The document was received in the ministry of war at 12.23 P. M., and was published at once. Immediately afterward the Emperor Francis Joseph telegraphed to the German Emperor. After thanking him "most sincerely and heartily for [his] friendly telegram," Francis Joseph said, that in view of the Russian mobilization along his borders,

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* See above, pp. 196–197.

† Berchtold had also learned that the German Government declined to join in the proposed *démarche* in Paris and St. Petersburg warning against further military measures. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July, received 5 A. M.: A III 51.

‡ Conrad, IV, 153.

> I have ordered the mobilization of my entire armed forces. The operations of my army in progress against Serbia cannot be disturbed by the threatening and provocative attitude of Russia. A new rescue of Serbia by the intervention of Russia is bound to have the most serious consequences for my territories, and therefore it is impossible for me to permit any such intervention. I am aware of the significance of my decision, at which I arrived with confidence in the justice of God and the certainty that your armed power will with unflinching loyalty stand up for my empire and the Triple Alliance.‡

The Emperor's message was a complete refusal of the German advice.

From a military point of view, the Austro-Hungarian general mobilization was a quite legitimate and necessary reply to the Russian partial mobilization: the 28 Austrian divisions mobilized on 28 July were obviously insufficient to confront 12 Serbian, 4 Montenegrin, and 33 Russian divisions§ in case the dispute led to a general war. Nevertheless the Russian Government and the other Powers were assured that this measure was of "a purely defensive character" and that Austria-Hungary had "no aggressive intentions of any kind against Russia." On the contrary,

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* See above, p. 185.

† Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 31 July, 8 A. M.; A III 50.

‡ Francis Joseph to William II, telegram, 31 July, 1 P. M.; A III, 49, B.

§ Conrad's estimate; Conrad, IV, 151.

> negotiations in keeping with the situation, from which we allow ourselves to hope for a general settlement, are again going ahead in friendly fashion between the Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburg.*

The Austro-Hungarian staff, unlike the German, did not insist mobilization had to mean war.† Conrad did not intend to fight Russia unless it were necessary.

This attitude was the more imperative because of the arrival of news which, though hardly unexpected, had hitherto not been definite. First of all, Berlin now felt sure that Great Britain would enter the war on the side of Russia and France;‡ this was confirmed by Count Mensdorff, who also reported the opinion of his German colleague that "the last hope" of avoiding war was for Vienna to agree to negotiate with St. Petersburg via Berlin.§

In the second place, the relations with Italy had grown more and more delicate, thanks to Count Berchtold's dilatory tactics. When the question of compensation was first mooted on 25 July, the minister had tried to evade the issue:

> Since to-day it is still uncertain whether and to what extent we shall be forced to a provisional occupation of Serbian territory, a discussion of this subject seems to me premature, and I shall be constrained to postpone it for the present.||

To this the Marquis di San Giuliano replied, in pointed language, that "Germany accepts our interpretation of Article VII"¶ and that an immediate agreement between Austria-Hungary and Italy was "urgent," in order to "consolidate more

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* Circular telegram of Berchtold, 31 July, sent 1 August, 7 A. M.; A III 78.

† Conrad, IV, 153–155.

‡ Szögyénv to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July, received 9.10 A. M.; A III 52.

§ Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July, received 31 July, 11.30 A. M.; A III 43.

|| Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 26 July; A II 51.

¶ Flotow had been instructed to say so. Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 28 July; G 287. Mérey complained sharply of the German attitude and even expressed the opinion that Germany was trying to prevent war with Serbia and force the Monarchy to content itself with a useless diplomatic victory. Mérey to Berchtold, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,827.

effectively the intimate relations between the two Powers."* But although Count Berchtold, under pressure from Germany, had agreed to discuss the matter,† he had not accepted the Italian contention. Moreover, he had insisted upon absolute secrecy.‡ So when Herr von Mérey—much against his own wishes and judgment§—took up the question with Rome, the overture for a discussion was treated with considerable coolness.|| After consulting with the prime minister, the Marquis di San Giuliano replied that "Italy had no *obligation* to take part in the war."

> This was not to say that if the eventuality arose, Italy would not ask herself whether it suited her interests better from a military point of view to align herself with us or to remain neutral. Personally he inclined to the former alternative and considered this the more probable course, provided that Italy's interests in the Balkans were protected and we [Austria] did not contemplate changes there which would create for us a privileged position to the prejudice of Italy.¶

The meaning of the Italian language was clear: if Italy was to be kept in line, she must be offered compensation promptly

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* Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 11.

† See above, pp. 140–141.

‡ Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 29 July; A III 9.

§ Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; A II 86. On the following day he wrote a bitter letter complaining that his advice was disregarded. "I am ambassador in Rome for you in questions which concern Italy—formally, at least, the most competent person. If now in an important question pending between us and Italy, I express an opinion fully, emphatically and with reasons, and am at one with my minister in my opinion, it is certainly not altogether normal and natural that in reply to the views or pressure of a third state, my ideas should be thrown into the waste-basket and a decision taken in the contrary sense. So I must ask myself why we allow ourselves the luxury of an ambassador in Rome—for current business any little diplomat would be sufficient—and not preferably hand over the representation of our political interests in Italy to the German embassy, which is obviously much more competent." Mérey to Berchtold, private, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,991. In Mérey's opinion, the slightest concession would cause Italy to make "the gesture customary in this country of holding out a hollow hand." "True to her tradition, Italy must on this occasion get something, realize a profit, and a pure gain at that, without a *quid pro quo* and without risk." If only the Monarchy stood firm, "Italy would not leave the Triple Alliance, not even though three-fourths of the population were not at all in favor of it." Mérey to Berchtold, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,989.

|| Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 36.

¶ Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 38. The same thing was said to the German ambassador. Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 419. Berlin informed Szögyény. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July, received 5 A. M.; A III 53. Cf. Salandra, pp. 97–98.

and without quibbling. Count Berchtold was disposed to make the attempt;* so General Conrad suggested the offer of Valona† and said that he would approach General Cadorna, the new Italian chief of staff.‡ But both this question and the answer to the British proposal were left to the ministerial council which met during the morning.

The council was attended, as were those on 7 July and 19 July, by Count Berchtold, Count Stürgkh, Count Tisza, General von Krobatin, Ritter von Bilinski, Admiral Kailer and Count Hoyos. General Conrad was not present; on the other hand, Baron Burián, the Hungarian minister *a latere* in Vienna, was present. The object of the meeting is described in the minutes as "discussion of the English proposal for mediation and the compensations to be offered to Italy." Its tone and temper was even more reckless than had been the case on 7 July and 19 July. After Count Berchtold had explained the British proposal, as transmitted by the German Government, he said that the Emperor had approved his own suggestion that

> we should carefully avoid accepting the British proposal, so far as its merits are concerned, but we should be conciliatory in the form of our reply, in order not to run counter to the wishes of the German chancellor.

In his opinion, a mere occupation of Belgrade would be of little value, even if Russia were willing to tolerate it:

> This would be mere tinsel, for Russia would come forward as

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* The minister in Munich reported the opinion of Count Hertling, the Bavarian premier, that "the obligations of Italy under the alliance were entirely clear and, according to the reports reaching him, would certainly be carried out; the only question was whether Italy might not, by an interpretation *sui generis*, later wish to attach certain claims to the text of the treaty of alliance." Velics to Berchtold, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,073.

† See above, I, 406–407.

‡ On receipt of news from Marseilles that the French military authorities were commandeering ships (consulate to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,895), it was decided to put certain units of the Austro-Hungarian fleet on a war footing, "in order to be in position in all circumstances to fulfil our secret agreements with Italy [see above, I, 25–26] and to co-operate with the Italian fleet, which has been put in a much greater state of preparedness." The ambassador was instructed to inform the Italian foreign minister. Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,985.

the savior of Serbia and especially of the Serbian army. The latter would remain intact, and in two or three years we should be confronted by another attack on the part of Serbia in much more unfavorable conditions.

For these reasons he intended to reply "very courteously" to the British proposal, but to lay down three conditions for mediation: (1) the military operations against Serbia must continue; (2) the Russian mobilization must be suspended; and (3) Austria-Hungary's conditions must be accepted in their entirety and without discussion. In other words, absolutely nothing was to be conceded, although Herr von Tschirschky had been given to understand that the reply would not be "an unconditional refusal."*

There was general agreement with this position. The Austrian premier declared that "the idea of a conference was so odious to him that he should not like even to appear to accept it"; the finance minister said that "the proceedings of the London conference [of 1912–1913] aroused so hideous a memory that public opinion would revolt against the repetition of such a performance." Count Tisza, however, pointed out that instead of insisting on the terms of the ultimatum, they should formulate "new demands on Serbia" and reserve the right to communicate them to the Powers; which shows how little the Austro-Hungarian statesmen cared about avoiding a European war. This suggestion fell on eager ears, and the third of Count Berchtold's conditions was eliminated.

Turning to the question, of Italy, the minister explained the attitude of the Italian Government, which was supported by "daily *démarches*" on the part of Germany.† In his opinion they had two courses: either to repudiate the Italian interpretation of Article VII of the Triple Alliance but as a "*beau geste*" to offer compensation; or to accept the Italian interpretation but to recognize the claim to compensation only if the Monarchy acquired territory permanently in the Balkans. The latter course was decided upon, but on the conditions that (1) "Italy had actually fulfilled her duty as ally" and (2) if Italy claimed Valona, "Austria-Hungary would assure herself of a predominating influence in northern Albania." Thus the Austro-Hungarian Government yielded not at all to the German representations in favor of an unconditional offer to Italy; it was as stubborn on this question as it was in the matter of the '*Halt in Belgrad.*'*

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* Memorandum of Stumm, 31 July; G 468.

† Szögyény reported that Berlin regarded the prospects of victory "distinctly diminished" if the Triple Alliance did not present a united front and urged as "large" an interpretation of Article VII as possible. It was not a question, he said, of German loyalty to Austria, but merely that they needed Italy, "in order to be able to enter the general conflict with security." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 32. Berchtold asked Mérey's opinion. Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 30 July; A III 35. He bitterly opposed any concession, but his reply was not received until after the decision had been taken to accept the Italian view. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July, received 1 August; A III 61.

The decision on the British proposal was communicated, though somewhat belatedly and perhaps purposely so, to the German, British and Russian Governments. The German chancellor was authorized to declare to Sir Edward Grey that

> in spite of the change in the situation brought about by the [partial] mobilization of Russia, but in full appreciation of the efforts of England for the maintenance of peace, we are ready to take up the proposal of Sir Edward Grey for mediation between us and Serbia.

The conditions of mediation were to be that the military operations against Serbia continued, and that the British Government should bring about the cessation of the Russian mobilization; which was in accordance with the decision of the council of ministers. But by not mentioning his own third condition that Serbia must accept the original Austrian terms or Count Tisza's scheme for imposing new demands, Count Berchtold managed to create a false impression of his attitude.† In London, as we shall see, the Austro-Hungarian reply was considered to hold out prospects of an accommodation, even at the last minute, and was taken up by Sir Edward Grey.

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* Protocol of the council of ministers, 31 July; A III 79. Berchtold sent the Emperor a summary of the proceedings, adding that "Baron Conrad hopes to induce Italy, besides fulfilling her obligations with respect to France, also to place troops at his disposal for Galicia"; A III 80. There was no limit to Austrian optimism on this day! When this "hope" reached Berlin the next day, it had become an "assurance that Italy will faithfully fulfil her obligations as an ally." General staff to foreign office, 1 August; G 609.

† Berchtold to Mensdorff, Szögyény and Szápáry, telegrams, 31 July, sent 1 August, 3.45 A. M.; A III 65.

By way of further concealing his real plans, Count Berchtold made a final play with his declaration of disinterestedness. His ambassador in Paris had reported that there was great anxiety there about "the Sandjak, the annexation of certain Serbian districts, infringement of sovereign rights, and a protectorate over Serbia."* Count Szécsen was therefore asked to point out to M. Viviani that

> we have already officially informed St. Petersburg that in our action against Serbia we do not intend to make any territorial acquisitions or to infringe the sovereignty of the kingdom;

and to deny that the reoccupation of the Sandjak was contemplated, provided the war was localized.† As a matter of fact, the declaration had been made, but, as will be remembered, "not in binding form."‡ Count Mensdorff had also reported that Sir Edward Grey's efforts for peace might have better chance of success

> if, although it is now perhaps too late, we could make some kind of declaration about Serbia's future existence as an independent state which would be in any way acceptable to Russia.§

To this hint Count Berchtold replied that Austria had already declared "officially to Russia and the other Powers" that she would respect the independence of Serbia and not take any territory, but that "Russia several days ago ordered mobilization as a threat to us."|| This was to some extent misleading, for the

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* Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 41.

† Circular of Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 62.

‡ See above, pp. 2–3. On this day, Mérey told the Bulgarian minister in Rome that "Austria-Hungary had given the declaration not to make territorial conquests without undertaking any engagement." Rizov to Radoslavov, 31 July; *KSF*, VI, 251 (March, 1928).

§ Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July, received 31 July, 2.30 P. M.; A III 42. The belated Austro-Hungarian declaration was, in fact, not known in London.

|| Berchtold to Mensdorff, telegram, 31 July, sent 1 August, 7 A. M.; A III 66.

declaration had not been made to the other Powers until the evening before. In both cases, it will be observed, the Austro-Hungarian minister was careful to say that the Monarchy would not take territory: he did not promise to respect the territorial integrity of Serbia.* In view of all that is known of the real intentions of the Cabinet of Vienna, it is hard not to regard these eleventh-hour assurances to the other Powers as attempts to deceive them.

The decision on the question of compensation to Italy was conveyed to the Duke of Avarna on the same day, 31 July. He, Herr von Tschirschky and Count Berchtold drafted a declaration,† on the basis of which the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Rome was instructed to inform the Marquis di San Giuliano that

> we now definitely count on Italy's fulfilling fully and completely her obligations under the alliance, about which I for my part have never been in doubt.‡

In the telegram, which was sent the next day, it was accordingly stated that Austria-Hungary accepted the Italian interpretation of Article VII, "on condition that Italy observes a friendly attitude toward the military operations in progress between Austria-Hungary and Serbia and fulfills her duty as ally in case the present conflict may develop into a general conflagration."§ The statement was sufficiently vague to leave Count Berchtold a loophole for argument later.

With these several *démarches* the Austro-Hungarian Government brought to an end its long debate with the Powers. To

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* It is interesting to note what the German ambassador in Rome was saying on this subject to his Austro-Hungarian colleague: "In Berlin they are really not clear in their minds about the purpose of our action. So long as we do not annex all or part of Serbia, even a Serbia weakened by defeat will be in a position to carry on agitation, to found secret societies, to plan *attentats*, etc." Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 37.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 573.

‡ Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 31 July; A III 59. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 577.

§ Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 1 August; A III 87. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 594.

Russia it conceded nothing, to Italy nothing definite. With astonishing steadfastness and skill it had held to the course laid out at the beginning. Count Berchtold has been severely criticized because he would make no concessions. Why should he make concessions? He had explained his intentions to the German Government and received its approval; and he was justified in thinking that the promises of support had been given only after mature calculation of the risks involved. That the German Government seemed, at the last minute, to be alarmed by the prospect of a European war, was, for the Austro-Hungarian minister, incidental.* In the circumstances, it is not surprising that he adhered to his programme. From this time, Vienna was content to leave vital decisions to Berlin, and very largely drops out of the diplomatic picture.

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* It may be urged against Berchtold that the probable participation of Great Britain in the war changed the whole situation and should have caused him to make concessions. On the other hand, Moltke had told Conrad that he did not expect British neutrality, and Moltke's advice to refuse the British proposal was tantamount to saying that Great Britain could be ignored.

CHAPTER XVII

THE RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION

The Decisions of France, 29–30 July

If in the last two chapters little or no mention has been made of France while the conduct of the other five Powers has been examined at length, it was not because France had ceased to count in the calculations of governments. Far from it! The warning of Sir Edward Grey to Prince Lichnowsky and the bid of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg for British neutrality proved that the position of France was a vital matter for both Great Britain and Germany; furthermore the German plan of campaign, in case war should come, involved an immediate invasion of France, although the issue out of which the war would arise did not concern France directly. But French diplomacy was passive. Having refused from the start to exert pressure on Russia unless Germany sought to restrain Austria-Hungary,* there was little that it could do, except to support the efforts of Sir Edward Grey; which it did. It was further handicapped by the absence of the head of the government and the chief of state, who did not return to Paris until noon on Wednesday, 29 July. At bottom, of course, France was bound to Russia, not merely by the promises made the week before, but by the circumstances of the European situation, and was well aware of the fact.

The suspicions entertained at the Quai d'Orsay from the beginning were strengthened by the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war.† "The Austro-German attitude is becoming clearer," the acting foreign minister noted on the morning of 29 July. He described it as "dilatory": at Berlin "the idea of a conference is rejected without any other expedient being suggested,"* and "they refuse to take any positive action in Vienna";† at Vienna "they would like to keep St. Petersburg in play with the illusion of an *entente* while they are taking action against Serbia."‡ The German ambassador did little to counteract these impressions. For while stating that Germany was "still continuing her efforts" for direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg and was endeavoring to discover "how far Austria wishes to go," he said that "Berlin could not exercise any pressure" to stay the Austrian military operations. Likewise when M. Bienvenu-Martin suggested that "at a later date" Germany might consider Sir Edward Grey's proposal, Baron von Schoen "made an evasive answer."§

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* See above, pp. 12–15.

† The American ambassador sent the following message to President Wilson: "Situation in Europe is regarded here as the gravest in history. It is apprehended that civilization is threatened by demoralization which would follow a general conflagration. Demonstrations made against war here last night by laboring classes; it is said to be the first instance of its kind in France. It is felt that if Germany once mobilizes no backward step will be taken. France has strong reliance on her army but it is not giving way to undue excitement. There is faith and reliance on our high ideals and purposes, so that I believe expression from our nation would have great weight in this crisis. My opinion is encouraged at reception given utter-

So M. Izvolski was able to send his chief an encouraging report. Both Paris and London, he said, reject the German "sophistry" that they should exert pressure in St. Petersburg:

> In both capitals the answer was given that any action taken must be at Vienna, as it was Austria's inordinate demands, her refusal to discuss Serbia's few reservations and her declaration of war that threatened to provoke a general war. France and England are absolutely unable to bring any moderating pressure to bear on Russia, who has so far shown the greatest modera-

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ances of British Minister for Foreign Affairs. I believe that a strong plea for delay and moderation from the President of the United States would meet with the respect and approval of Europe and urge the prompt consideration of this question. This suggestion is consistent with our plea for arbitration treaties and attitude toward world affairs generally: I would not appear officious but deem it my duty to make this expression to you." Herrick to Bryan, telegram, 28 July, 4 P. M.; US, pp. 18–19. For the result of this appeal, see below, p. 477.

* This was not correct, for the German Government was supporting the plan for direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and this was known in Paris. J. Cambon to Bienvenu-Martin, 28 July; F 81.

† This was also not correct, but Bethmann had told Goschen of his action at Vienna under pledge of secrecy; see above, p. 143. Goschen afterward complained that "my chief diplomatic difficulty has been to satisfy Cambon's curiosity as to my repeated visits to the Chancellor without giving the latter away on points which he made me promise to keep secret." Goschen to Nicolson, private, [30] July; B 677.

‡ Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 29 July; F 85.

§ Circular of Bienvenu-Martin, 29 July; F 94. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 345. Cf. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, no. 202, 29 July; Romberg, p. 31.

tion, more particularly in her advice to Serbia to accept as much as possible of the Austrian note.

On the other hand, he had to add, since Germany "now inclines to mediatory action at both St. Petersburg and Vienna," the French foreign office thought it desirable that "Russia should lend all her support to the proposal for mediation which will be made by Sir Edward Grey."* The Quai d'Orsay, for all its suspicions of the Central Powers, was not ready to give its ally a free hand.†

During the day numerous reports came in of increasing military preparations in Germany. It was said that covering troops were moving into position on the frontier and that artillery had left Düsseldorf in the direction of Cologne; that the requisition of horses and automobiles had commenced; even that the last three classes of reservists had received their warning notices. Men on leave from the Bavarian regiments at Metz had been recalled, and troops arrived at Frankfurt in field dress. Bridges and railways were placed under military guard. The mills at Illkirch (Alsace-Lorraine) were said to have been asked to stop delivery to their ordinary customers and to keep all their output for the army.‡

The French ministers, so M. Poincaré tells us, were "firmly united in a determination to do the impossible to avoid war and also to neglect no preparation for defense."§ Many steps toward the latter end were taken on 29 July. During the morning officers on leave abroad were ordered to rejoin their corps.* At 1 P. M. the wireless stations along the frontier were put on a war footing, and wireless posts were established for the corps along the frontier. Later, measures of protection were ordered for fortified places; finally, the covering troops were instructed to begin defensive works.† The British military attaché in Paris, who had "spent the last few days in looking round both in and outside Paris," found general officers of the French army "hard at work" and unable to get away; and his opinion on 29 July was that

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* Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, no. 203, 29 July; Romberg, pp. 31–33; R 53 is slightly 'edited.'

† The American ambassador summarized the opinion in Paris as follows: "General feeling here seems to be more hopeful of confining hostilities to present belligerents [Austria and Serbia]. The belief that England will support Russia and France in any eventuality encourages the feeling that Germany will not take any provocative action." Herrick to Bryan, telegram, 29 July; US, p. 20.

‡ *Les armées françaises dans la grande guerre*, I, 75. Poincaré, IV, 374. According to the German accounts, the recall of men on leave and the military protection of the railways were not ordered until the evening of 29 July, after the deliberations at Potsdam, and no reservists were called up until the mobilization on 1 August. The French claim to have captured documents—soldiers' diaries, etc.—which show that on 29 July reservists were incorporated in six different units at Cologne, Strasburg, Metz, and Amberg. P. Camena d'Almeida, *L'armée allemande avant et pendant la guerre 1914–1918* (Paris, 1919), pp. 86–87.

§ Poincaré, IV, 371.

> all precautions prior to a mobilization have been carried out and it now only remains for the button to be pressed for the necessary reservists to be called up.

He denied, however, that "reservists are joining their units," as stated in some papers; "certain men have to undergo their reserve (*répétition*) training, have asked to be allowed to do so at the present time instead of later on and I believe some have been permitted to do so."‡ There can be little doubt that the French had gone farther in their preparations than the German intelligence service had been able to discover, and apparently, farther than the Germans.

The measures taken by France are to be explained not only by the reports arriving from Germany, but also by the news which M. Izvolski communicated at 11.15 A. M. of the Russian partial mobilization. For however justified that step might be in the eyes of the French Government, however clearly Herr von Jagow had been understood to promise that Germany would not have to reply to Russian measures directed against Austria-Hungary alone,§ the Russian action provided the German general staff with an argument for demanding counter-measures. The situation had become more acute, and the French were determined not to be caught napping.

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* *Ibid.*, IV, 374.

† *Les armées françaises*, I, 74–75.

‡ Yarde-Buller to Bertie, 29 July; E 321, enclosure. "Feeling runs high in military circles and in the high command," was the Russian attaché's impression. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; Romberg, p. 34.

§ See above, pp. 93–94.

But the Russian Government, at the same moment of announcing its military measures, had also appealed for the mediation of Great Britain to prevent the Austro-Hungarian armies from overrunning Serbia. M. Viviani's first action after his return to Paris at noon was to give his support to this plea. The French ambassador in London was instructed

> to ask Sir Edward Grey to be good enough to renew as soon as possible at Berlin, in the form which he may consider most opportune and effective, his proposal of mediation by the four Powers, which had in principle obtained the adherence of the German Government.*

But decisions might have to be taken at any moment, before the Britsh mediation had become effective. So between 5 and 7 P. M. a council of ministers was held under the presidency of M. Poincaré "to take cognizance of the latest telegrams and to deliberate on the situation."†

Their deliberations were interrupted by a *démarche* of the German ambassador which was probably not without influence on their decisions. At 5.30‡ Baron von Schoen, acting under the instructions sent him at noon,§ called attention to the military measures of the French Government:

> France [he said] was able to act in this way, but in Germany preparations could not be secret and French opinion should not be alarmed if Germany decided on them.

M. Viviani did not deny that measures had been taken, but did deny that they "could give their neighbors any cause for disquietude"; according to Schoen, he even remarked that "he would not feel troubled if the same thing happened on our side." France's wish to lend herself to any negotiations for the maintenance of peace, he said, could not be doubted, and the German ambassador reported: "Viviani refuses to give up hope for the maintenance of peace, which was sincerely desired here."* Friendly as the conversation was, it was not, from the French point of view, reassuring.

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* Viviani to P. Cambon, 29 July; F 97. There is no record in the British documents of any conversation between Grey and Cambon on the subject of this telegram. Grey, however, did send for Lichnowsky and spoke to him in the sense suggested by Viviani, adding his suggestion that Austria should occupy Belgrade and then open negotiations. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 368. See above, p. 159.

† Poincaré, IV, 371.

‡ Poincaré, *Les origines de la guerre*, p. 251. General Messimy speaks of two cabinet meetings, separated by Schoen's visit to Viviani. Recouly, p. 73.

§ G 341; see above, pp. 134–135.

M. Poincaré does not inform us of the discussions in the council of ministers. But he has described the problem which confronted them:

> Two tasks which were difficult to reconcile and were equally sacred were imposed on us: to do the impossible to prevent a conflict, to do the impossible in order that we might be ready for it if in spite of all it broke upon us. And there were still two other duties which also sometimes ran the risk of opposing each other: not to break an alliance upon which French policy had rested for a quarter of a century and the rupture of which would leave us isolated and at the mercy of our rivals; yet to do what was incumbent upon us in inducing our ally to show moderation in a matter in which we were much less interested than it was.†

This states the case succinctly. If France refused to support Russia in what, after all, public opinion outside of Germany and Austria-Hungary regarded as a good cause, Russia would be left to face the Central Powers single-handed; which obviously she could not do. In that event, Austria would overcome Serbia and either annex or partition the little country, for Italy would be helpless to prevent it; the balance in the Balkans and in Europe would be upset; the Austro-German combination would establish their diplomatic supremacy. And in France the memory of Tangier and Agadir was too fresh to permit any doubt of the ultimate intentions of Germany. It may be said, quite truly, that if France had declined to march with Russia, the peace of Europe probably would have been preserved. But it would have been a peace tolerable only to Austria-Hungary and Germany, a peace established by threats, and, faced with this prospect, the French Government made its decision without hesitation.

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* Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 367. Cf. also Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 12. Viviani to P. Cambon and Paléologue, 30 July; F 101.

† Poincaré, IV, 412.

After the council, M. Viviani confirmed to M. Izvolski "the firm determination of the French Government to act in agreement" with Russia.

> This decision [he said] is supported by all classes of society and by all parties, including the Radical Socialists, who have just addressed to him a resolution expressing their absolute confidence and the patriotic feelings of the party.*

M. Poincaré was of the same opinion. M. de Margerie, the political director of the Quai d'Orsay, said that

> the President, from his conversations along his journey with prefects and politicians, had become convinced of the firm, energetic, and at the same time calm state of public opinion, which plainly formed a correct estimate of the true significance of events.†

The government attached no importance to the anti-militaristic demonstrations of the revolutionary party, and intended to take energetic measures against them.‡ The press was equally firm, so M. Izvolski noted:

> The question of solidarity with us is not once discussed, but is taken as a matter of course. All journalists express themselves in this sense, including such prominent personalities belonging to very different parties as Pichon, Clemenceau, and even Jaurès, and also Hervé, the father of anti-militarism.§

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* Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R 55.

† This was not a peculiarly French symptom. At the meeting of the Prussian ministry the next day, Bethmann-Hollweg stated that "general public feeling was good in Germany," which was confirmed by all the ministers; G 456.

‡ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; Romberg, p. 33.

§ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; Romberg, p. 33. The German opinion was: "French press in part breaking into insults against Germany." General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372. The London *Times* correspondent reported: "Pes-

All this was doubtless very comforting to the Russian minister of foreign affairs, and we shall see that he made good use of it.

But if the decision of the French Government reflected accurately the national sentiment, there was no hysteria behind it, as in 1870. President Poincaré as he drove at noon from the Gare du Nord to the Élysée Palace was hailed by cheering crowds, from which an occasional *"A Berlin"* was heard. But if we may believe the *Times'* correspondent, "the chauvinistic note was far from being present, and it was distinctly a patriotic display and not a war demonstration." In this judgment the British ambassador concurred. "French public up to the present," he informed his chief on the evening of 29 July, "is disinclined to allow itself to be worked up to warlike excitement."* And the information of the German general staff was to the same effect: "War enthusiasm not present in the country."† The French Government and the French people accepted the idea of war, one may fairly say, as *'une nécessité inéluctable';* in which they were at one with the other peoples and governments of Europe.‡

During the night the Russian ambassador received the telegram which M. Sazonov had despatched after his third inter-

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simism continues in Paris, and the tone of the Press against Germany is much sharper." The *Temps* said: "It is henceforth certain that Germany has not wished to restrain her ally" (30, *i. e.*, afternoon of 29, July). Cf. Scott, pp. 191–202, *passim.*

* Bertie to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 270. The ambassador complained, however, that "many newspapers are writing about Germany in a way calculated to excite public opinion."

† General staff to foreign office, 29 July; G 372.

‡ The Austro-Hungarian ambassador analyzed the French attitude as follows: "Since it is not to be denied *que c'est nous qui avons déclanché le mouvement*, we are naturally held responsible for all the dangers and their financial consequences as they are now manifesting themselves. The return of MM. Poincaré and Izvolski has also encouraged the newspaper campaign against us. In spite of a chauvinistic national pride, in spite of a justified patriotic confidence, people here are rightly anxious about the war and its incalculable consequences. '*Mais la peur est une mauvaise conseillère!*' The general impression is that Serbia has humiliated herself in her reply as deeply as a state has rarely done. It is believed that the differences between our demands and the Serbian answer, which for that matter are not well understood, could easily be adjusted by negotiations. No objection would have been raised, in my opinion, if Serbia had accepted our note *tale quale*. But it cannot be understood why a world conflagration should arise because of some questions of words [*gewisser redactioneller Fragen*]. I am being constantly asked, what is to happen now, what is the Monarchy now demanding?" Szécsen to Berchtold, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,082.

view with Count Pourtalès on 29 July and after the decision had been taken to order general mobilization.* The telegram stated that the German ambassador had notified the determination of his government to mobilize if Russia did not stop her military preparations, and justified those preparations on the ground of "the mobilization already begun by Austria of eight army corps." It then continued:

> As we cannot accede to Germany's wishes, we have no alternative but to hasten on our own military preparations and to assume that war is probably inevitable. Please inform the French Government of this, and at the same time express our thanks for the declaration made in its behalf by its ambassador that we can fully rely on the support of our ally France.† In the existing circumstances this declaration is particularly valuable to us. It is very desirable that England also without loss of time should associate herself with France and Russia, as only in this way can she succeed in preventing a dangerous alteration in the European balance.‡

M. Izvolski communicated the telegrams to MM. Viviani and Messimy, and the president of the council took it to the Élysée, where it was the subject of anxious discussion.

Well it might be, for it brought war in sight. "M. Viviani felt, not without reason," says M. Poincaré, "that M. Sazonov was now interpreting the assurances which M. Paléologue had been able to give him in a rather wide sense."§ He decided to get to the bottom of the matter. With the approval of the President, he drafted the following telegram which was sent at 7 A. M. on 30 July to the French ambassadors in St. Petersburg and London:

> As I have stated in my telegram of 27 July, the Government of the Republic is determined to neglect no effort toward a solu-

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* See above, pp. 105–108.

† The reference is to the declaration of Paléologue on 28 July; see above, p. 89.

‡ Sazonov to Izvolski and Benckendorff, 29 July; R, 1925 87; Romberg, p. 30.

§ For Paléologue's elaboration of his instructions of 27 July, or the Russian misinterpretation of his language, see above, p. 89.

> tion of the conflict and to support the action of the Imperial Government in the interest of general peace. On the other hand France is resolved to fulfill all the obligations of the alliance. But, in the same interest of general peace and in view of the fact that conversations have begun between the Powers not directly interested, I think it would be well that in taking any precautionary measures of defense to which she thinks she must proceed, Russia should not immediately take any step which may offer Germany a pretext for a total or partial mobilization of her forces.*

The request made of Russia was both clear and reasonable: she should not proceed to general mobilization until diplomacy had been given a final chance. Or to put it in another way, France was ready to honor her signature, but she would prefer that the necessity should not arise.

The telegram was shown to M. Izvolski, who sent it almost *verbatim* to his government.† Thus when M. Sazonov in the course of 30 July came to decide the question of general mobilization, he knew that his ally was advising against that step.

But the ambassador in Paris reported two conversations which sensibly diminished the strength of the French pressure. M. de Margerie, the political director of the foreign office, had said:

> The French Government does not wish to interfere in our military preparations, but regards it as highly desirable that in view of the negotiations for peace that are still proceeding, they should be as little public and challenging in character as possible.

And M. Messimy, the minister of war, had developed the same idea to the Russian military attaché:

> We could declare that in the higher interests of peace we are ready to delay our preparations for mobilization temporarily,

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* Viviani to Paléologue and P. Cambon, telegrams, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 385–386; B 294. In the text given by Poincaré, the words "*qui offrit à l'Allemagne un pretexte*" have been omitted, through a printer's error. The text published in F 101 is not quite accurate, but does not, however, misrepresent the sense, in spite of the transposition of two sentences.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; Romberg, p. 36.

> since this would not prevent us from continuing our preparations and indeed from intensifying them, but we should have to refrain as far as possible from movements of troops on a large scale.*

If M. Izvolski correctly reported his interlocutors, then the attitude of the French Government bore considerable resemblance to that of Germany: it was manœuvring for position rather than trying to prevent the war.

M. Poincaré roundly denies the accuracy of the Russian ambassador's language, on the ground that the despatch to M. Paléologue, which unquestionably did advise against mobilization, was approved by the council of ministers, including M. Messimy. In the case of M. de Margerie he adduces no proof. In defense of the minister of war he states that M. Izvolski told M. Viviani that in his conversation with the military attaché "M. Messimy had advised the suspension of the mobilization and particularly the stoppage of the movement of troops in mass"—which is somewhat different from what M. Izvolski reported and was in harmony with the wishes of the French Government, and which the ambassador promised to communicate to M. Sazonov.† Whatever the truth about these conversations, it seems clear that both MM. Poincaré and Viviani desired that Russia should not proceed to general mobilization until diplomacy had been given a final chance, and that on the other hand the Russian foreign minister was given to understand by his ambassador in Paris that the advice of the French Government was not so emphatic as its official language seemed to indicate.

The French statesmen, however, evidently expected little of diplomacy. In conformity with the opinion of M. Sazonov that "England should without loss of time associate herself with France and Russia," an instruction was sent to M. Paul Cambon to remind Sir Edward Grey of the letters exchanged in 1912 which provided for a joint examination of the situation and the possibility of joint action in the event of European tension.* This step would not have been taken, and the fact would not have been communicated to the Russian ambassador,† unless the situation had been regarded as exceedingly serious.‡

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* Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July, 8 A. M.; Romberg, p. 37.

† Poincaré, IV, 386–387, 408.

On the military side, important steps were also taken during the day. In the early morning news was received that German troops were occupying their war positions on the frontier and beginning defensive works. The chief of the general staff, General Joffre, requested that the French covering troops should be ordered into position at once. This would involve the mobilization of five corps in eastern France: "a serious decision to take," remarks M. Poincaré. However desirable from the military point of view, "diplomatic reasons just as strong and just as imperative imposed the greatest prudence and the greatest reserve." In the end, a compromise was reached. The troops might be ordered up, but on certain conditions: (1) they were to march to their positions; (2) no reservists were to be called up; (3) no requisitions were to be taken, but supplies purchased; (4) the troops were to be kept 10 kilometres from the frontier, "in order to prevent any contact between French and German patrols." General Joffre did not object to this last condition, provided it was not literally applied, since it did not prevent the concentration of the covering troops. Its purpose, of course, was to demonstrate to Great Britain the pacific intentions of France.§

In the afternoon it was reported that the German authorities were closing the roads into France and stopping automobiles. At 3.55 P. M. the prefect of Nancy telephoned that German cavalry had crossed the French frontier along the Rhine-Marne canal.* At 3.40 P. M. a telegram from St. Petersburg stated that "according to information received by the Russian general staff, the general mobilization of the German army will be ordered to-morrow."† This seemed to be confirmed by another telegram, received at 4, from Berlin:

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* Poincaré, IV, 386.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; Romberg, p. 37.

‡ The Spanish ambassador in Paris told his British colleague that "the President of the Republic told a friend this morning that he considers war inevitable." Bertie to Grey, private, 30 July; B 320, b. Such a second-hand report of what Poincaré may have said must be received with caution, for the bald statement is open to more than one interpretation.

§ Recouly, pp. 75-76. About noon the *Paris-Midi* published a statement that a council held at the Élysée during the night had determined on the mobilization of four classes of reservists. The police immediately seized the issue, and the minister of the interior issued a denial characterizing the story as an "absolutely fantastic rumor." The incident, which may be compared to that of the *Lokal-Anzeiger*, seems to have escaped the notice of the diplomatists, except Schoen, who made a brief report. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G, second edition, no. 436A.

> The Grand Duke of Hesse is said to be leaving for St. Petersburg in order to see the Tsar and find a means of *détente*. The rumor, however, is current that mobilization was decided upon at the council this morning and will probably be ordered to-morrow. At the Wilhelmstrasse the press correspondents were told that rumors of this kind could be neither confirmed nor denied, but that serious decisions had been taken. Great excitement prevails. I know that troops have occupied the forts at Metz.‡

So at 4.55 P. M. the order was sent for the covering troops to take up "their positions prepared against a sudden attack."

> Nevertheless for diplomatic reasons, it is indispensable that no incident shall be produced by our action. Consequently, no soldier nor any patrol shall, on any pretext, approach the frontier or cross the line—indicated by places—which keeps the French troops 10 kilometres from the frontier.§

Other orders issued during the day provided for the placing of guns in position, for the preliminary steps necessary to insure the supplies of the army in the event of mobilization, and for the detached officers to rejoin their corps. Finally at 7.10 P. M. General Lyautey, the resident-general of Morocco, was instructed to send seven battalions of troops to France at once without awaiting the order of mobilization.* The extent of these measures leaves little doubt that the French military authorities regarded war as practically certain and were taking every possible step short of actual mobilization. The justification of their action was that they believed Germany to be taking secretly very extensive measures and to be planning her mobilization for the following day.

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* Recouly, p. 78.

† Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 400.

‡ J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, "secret," 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 418–419. At 3.30 Cambon telegraphed that the news of mobilization was false. The hour at which his message arrived in Paris is not stated. Its effect was simply to convince the French Government that mobilization was proceeding secretly in Germany.

§ *Les armées françaises*, I, 75–76 and annex 15. The order was not literally applied. At certain points the distance from the frontier was not over 4 or 5 kilometres. The officials of the customs and forest services remained on the frontier.

30 July in St. Petersburg

It was this same suspicion of German intentions which enabled the Russian Government, in the course of 30 July, to convince the Tsar that general mobilization was necessary and not to be delayed. In coming to this decision, M. Sazonov may have been influenced by "the firm determination of the French Government to act in agreement with its ally";† but there was nothing new in this declaration, and even without it, the Russian action would doubtless have been the same.

The day began with a telephone conversation between M. Sazonov and the minister of agriculture, M. Krivoshein, both of whom were "greatly disturbed by the stoppage of the general mobilization," for this "threatened to place Russia in an extremely difficult position in the event of relations with Germany becoming acute." This eventuality was quite possible, even probable. Not only had Count Pourtalès handed in a warning on the evening before,[*] but Herr von Jagow had told the Russian ambassador in Berlin that in spite of the contrary promise to M. Jules Cambon, Germany would have to reply to the Russian mobilization against Austria.[†] M. Sazonov therefore urged his colleague to seek an audience of the Tsar "in order to represent to His Majesty the dangers called forth by the change" from general to partial mobilization.[‡]

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* *Les armées françaises*, I, 76–77.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R 55. See above, p. 229. On 11 September, 1914 the *Norddeutsche Allegemeine Zeitung* published a letter said to have been written on 30 July by B. de l'Escaille, the Belgian chargé in St. Petersburg. According to him, "England at the start let it be understood that she did not want to be dragged into a conflict. Sir George Buchanan said so openly. To-day every one in St. Petersburg is convinced—has even the assurance—that England will support France. This encouragement has had a powerful effect and has contributed not a little to giving the war party the upper hand." There is nothing in the British documents to justify any such assertions. The Belgian ambassador on the following day had just the opposite impression. "I have just had a talk with the British ambassador," he wrote. "He tells me that M. Sazonov has tried from the outset to ascertain the intentions of the London Government, but, up till now, in spite of the mobilization of the British fleet, Sir George Buchanan has not been instructed to make any communication of this kind to the Pont des Chantres. The instructions of the ambassador are to explain to St. Petersburg that if Russia desires the support of Great Britain, it must carefully avoid even the appearance of any aggressive step in the present crisis." Buisserett Steenbecque de Blarenghien to Davignon, 31 July; Belgian II 17.

At 11 A. M.[§] the foreign minister, the minister of war and the chief of staff discussed the situation, the reason being that

> information received during the night still further strengthened the opinion which they all held that it was imperative to prepare for a serious war without loss of time.

What this information was is not indicated in any detail in any of the accounts. Writing many years later, M. Sazonov remembered General Yanushkevich as having said that according to the information of the general staff, "the German mobilization had advanced much further than was generally supposed."[||] At the time he told the British and French ambassadors that the "Russian Government had absolute proof of military and naval preparations being made by Germany against Russia more especially in direction of Gulf of Finland,"[¶] and during the day he complained to Count Pourtalès that "the German fleet is lying at Danzig in a state of mobilization."[**] This was meagre enough information on which to base so serious a charge! The German view is that the only news which had reached the Russian general staff by the morning of 30 July was that "individual persons, supposedly reservists, who were accompanied to the station by their families, were leaving Berlin."[*] Conceivably the report published by four Berlin papers on the evening of 29 July that three corps on the eastern frontier were being mobilized,[†] had reached St. Petersburg. Sometime during the day a report was received from Stuttgart that the calling up of reservists had been announced for Saturday (1 August).[‡] But unless the archives of the Russian war office contain much unpublished material, we must conclude that the Russian general staff greatly exaggerated the picture which it drew for the foreign minister.

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[*] See above, p. 105.

[†] Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R, 1925 90.

[‡] Schilling, p. 62.

[§] Sazonov, p. 199, gives 2 P. M.

[||] Sazonov, p. 199.

[¶] Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 30 July, 1.15 P. M.; B 302, a.

[**] Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 459. Berlin replied that the story had been "invented." Jagow to Pourtalès, telegram, 31 July; G 462.

The two generals urged the Tsar by telephone to consent to the general mobilization, but he refused.[§] (According to one account, the premier, M. Goremykin, went to the Tsar, who was at Peterhof, during the morning, and "returned with the assurance that no general mobilization would be ordered."[||]) Finally, after M. Sazonov himself had talked with the Tsar, whose voice was that of "a man obviously not used to speaking on the telephone,"[¶] the Tsar reluctantly agreed to receive his foreign minister at 3 P. M., provided he did not mind coming at the same time as General Tatishchev—"for I haven't another minute to-day"! "The generals," says M. Sazonov, "heaved a sigh of relief."

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[*] *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, Anlage 22, p. 70.

[†] See above, p. 196.

[‡] Lermontov to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; R, 1925 112.

[§] The minister of war claims to have asked for an audience, but to have been unable to get an answer from the Tsar. Sukhomlinov, p. 365. He also appealed to the president of the Duma, Rodzyanko, who had just returned from Bad Nauheim and called on the minister at the latter's request. Sukhomlinov said that "the Emperor is suddenly vacillating in his decision, and has ordered the mobilization in the military districts intended for action against the Austrians to be stopped. [There is no other evidence that the Tsar cancelled the partial mobilization against Austria.] . . . All the mobilization notices and orders have been sent out. It is impossible to recall them, and any delay in the matter will be fatal." The minister urged the president of the Duma to have an audience of the Tsar and tell him that he had seen German cavalry in full war-kit at Wirballen, for the Tsar would not believe Sukhomlinov on this point. Rodzyanko and Sukhomlinov saw Sazonov as he was starting for Peterhof that afternoon. Rodzyanko asked Sazonov to tell the Tsar that "I, as head of the representatives of the people, solemnly declared that the Russian people would never forgive a delay which might precipitate the country into fatal confusion." M. V. Rodzyanko, *The Reign of Rasputin* (London, 1927), pp. 106–108. If we may believe the testimony of one of her ladies-in-waiting, the influence of the Tsarina was exercised against war, but a telegram from Rasputin predicting that the war would result in the destruction of the Empire was greatly resented by the Tsar as "an almost unprecedented interference in affairs of state." A. Vyrubova, *Memories of the Russian Court* (New York, 1923), p. 104.

[||] Rosen, *Forty Years of Diplomacy*, II, 170.

[¶] Sazonov, p. 201.

The chief of staff instructed the foreign minister in the arguments he should use with their obstinate master. On the military, that is the technical, side, there was

> the extreme danger that would result for us if we were not ready for war with Germany should circumstances demand the taking of decisive measures by us after the success of a general mobilization had been compromised by the recourse to a partial mobilization.

Politically, the mobilization was required by the alliance with France.[*] If M. Sazonov were successful, he was to telephone to General Yanushkevich, who would "smash his telephone" and go away so that it would not be possible to countermand the order for a second time. And so hopeful was the chief of staff that he telephoned to General Dobrorolski to come to him shortly after noon with the necessary military documents.[†] M. Sazonov asserts—naturally—that neither the minister of war nor the chief of staff had any desire for war,[‡] and the other evidence certainly suggests that the soldiers were guided by genuine military considerations. But by this time political and military necessities were hopelessly confused, and it is not possible to determine positively what were the predominating motives.[§]

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[*] Dobrorolski, p. 28. The military convention of 1893 did provide that in the event of mobilization by one of the Powers of the Triple Alliance, France and Russia should mobilize without further ado; but this had been modified by an agreement between the French and Russian general staffs, according to which a partial mobilization by Austria did not necessitate a French mobilization. Marchand, II, 419–420.

[†] Dobrorolski, p. 28.

[‡] Sazonov, p. 201.

[§] Unless otherwise indicated, the last three paragraphs are taken from Schilling, pp. 62–64. According to a review in *KSF*, VII, 1030–1033 (October, 1929), of B. Shaposhnikov, *Мозг армии* [The brain of the army] (Moscow and Leningrad, 1927–1929), the driving force in favor of mobilization was the group of young men in the foreign office (Schilling, Basily, Trubetskoy, etc.) and the second (operations) section of the navy department. The author, who was a member of the general staff and a former pupil of Yanushkevich when the latter was professor at the war academy, regards both Sazonov and Yanushkevich as weak men easily susceptible to pressure.

Returning to the Pechevsky Most from the office of the general staff (a matter of five minutes' walk), the foreign minister received the German, French and British ambassadors. Count Pourtalès came to execute the instructions sent late the night before.* He told M. Sazonov—and it was the first precise intimation of German mediation—that his government was asking Austria-Hungary to renew its assurances of territorial disinterestedness and to confine its military operations to a temporary occupation of Serbian territory; in consideration whereof Russia was asked not to begin war against Austria. When the minister replied, as he had on the previous day, that "assurance of territorial disinterestedness on the part of Austria-Hungary did not satisfy Russia," the ambassador "broke down completely." "Though personally anxious to avert war" (in the opinion of his British colleague), he "held that Austria had to administer a severe chastisement to Serbia, while Russia had to look on quietly and maintain the passive rôle of a disinterested spectator."† Now, says his French colleague, "he is bowled over; for he perceives the consequences of the intransigent policy of which he has been the instrument, if not indeed the instigator."‡ "We have reached a deadlock and are headed for war," he said, and begged M. Sazonov to propose a compromise which he might telegraph to his government. The Russian foreign minister thereupon wrote out this formula (in French):

> If Austria, recognizing that her conflict with Serbia has assumed the character of a question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum the points which violate the sovereign rights of Serbia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations.

The ambassador pointed out that the formula "maintained the original demands of Russia in their full extent," which was quite true, and made a counter-proposal: Russia might declare herself satisfied with an assurance from Austria-Hungary to respect the sovereignty of Serbia in her peace terms. As this was only a restatement of the declaration already made, it was declined by M. Sazonov. Thus neither was willing to budge an inch. The only consolation afforded Count Pourtalès was that "Sazonov's formula did not contain a word requiring the immediate suspension of Austria's punitive expedition."*

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* G 380; see above, pp. 165–166.

† Buchanan, I, 198–199.

‡ Paléologue, I, 37–38.

The formula was communicated to the French and British ambassadors in St. Petersburg and to the other Powers in "very urgent" telegrams. The ambassador in Berlin was asked

> to telegraph as soon as possible what attitude the German Government will adopt in face of this fresh proof of our readiness to do the utmost possible for a peaceful settlement of the question, for we cannot allow such discussions to continue solely in order that Germany and Austria may gain time.†

Sir George Buchanan was told that "if Austria rejects this proposal preparations for a general mobilization will be proceeded with and European war will be inevitable."‡ M. Paléologue was informed that "the acceptance of this proposal by Austria would have, as a logical corollary, the opening of a discussion by the powers in London."§ One is therefore disposed to believe that M. Sazonov sincerely desired to arrive at a peaceful settlement. Yet he telegraphed to his ambassador in Paris:

> Until we receive a thoroughly satisfactory answer from Austria through the German Government, we shall continue our military preparations. This is communicated to you very confidentially.||

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 421. Pourtalès, pp. 50–53. Buchanan (B 202, a). Paléologue (F 103) and Schilling, p. 50, give 2 A. M., 30 July, as the hour of the interview; but as Pourtalès' telegram was sent at 1.01 P. M. and states that he had "just" talked with Sazonov, there is no reason to doubt that the conversation took place in the latter part of the morning.

† Sazonov to Sverbeyev, telegram, 30 July; R 60.

‡ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 302, a.

§ Paléologue to Viviani, 30 July; F 103.

|| Sazonov to Izvolski, telegram, "very urgent," 30 July; Romberg, p. 36.

It was, of course, not unnatural that the Russian Government should insist on a German guarantee before stopping its military preparations; but this "very confidential" communication and the fact that the foreign minister was to see the Tsar in order to bring about general mobilization are decidedly compromising for M. Sazonov. He was giving the other Powers to understand that general mobilization would be held up until he got an answer to his formula, and at the same time he was planning to order general mobilization if he could secure the Tsar's consent. More than that, he was acting counter to the wishes of his ally. For M. Paléologue, on receipt of the telegram sent from Paris at 7 A. M.,* went at once to execute his instructions. His report runs:

> This very morning I have advised M. Sazonov to avoid every military measure which would provide Germany with a pretext for general mobilization. He replied that in the course of last night the Russian general staff had suspended certain secret precautionary steps the revelation of which might alarm the German general staff.†

The Russian minister did not say that he would not proceed to general mobilization; but he carefully concealed his plans from the French ambassador, and the French Government was justified in thinking that its advice was being followed. The slipperiness of M. Sazonov appears to have been on a level with that of his *confrères* in Berlin and Vienna. All that can be said in his behalf is that he may well have believed that Germany was determined to force the war and that Russia must be prepared to meet it.

After luncheon the foreign minister proceeded to Peterhof for his audience of the Tsar and was received at 3 o'clock.‡ Baron Schilling's contemporary account runs thus:

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* F 101; see above, pp. 231–232.

† Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 30 July, 4.31 P. M.; Poincaré, IV, 399. The version in F 102 is inaccurate.

‡ According to Schilling, p. 64, Sazonov and Tatishchev went from the capital and were received together. Sazonov, p. 202, states that Tatishchev was introduced after the minister had arrived.

> During the course of nearly an hour the minister proceeded to show that war was becoming inevitable, as it was clear to everybody that Germany had decided to bring about a collision, as otherwise she would not have rejected all the pacificatory proposals that had been made and could easily have brought her ally to reason. Under such circumstances it only remained to do everything that was necessary to meet the war fully armed and under the most favorable conditions possible. Therefore it was better to put away any fears that our warlike preparations would bring about a war, and to continue these preparations carefully rather than by reason of such fears to be taken unawares by war.*

M. Sazonov's own account is not different. He adds that he expressed his entire agreement with Generals Sukhomlinov and Yanushkevich:

> It was dangerous to delay the general mobilization any longer, since, according to the information they possessed, the German mobilization, though not as yet proclaimed officially, was fairly advanced. The perfection of the German military organization made it possible by means of personal notices to the reservists to accomplish a great part of the work quietly and then, after the formal orders have been issued, to complete the mobilization in a very short time. This circumstance gave a tremendous advantage to Germany, but we could counteract it to a certain extent by taking measures for our own mobilization in good time.†

The Tsar hesitated long. "Think of the responsibility you are advising me to assume!" he said to his minister. "Consider that it means sending thousands and thousands of men to death!"

"Your Majesty and your government have done everything possible to spare the world this frightful test," replied the minister, "but to-day I am convinced that diplomacy has done its work." And he urged that Germany should not be allowed "to surprise Russia in complete disorganization."‡

During a moment of silence General Tatishchev exclaimed, "Yes, it is hard to decide," and was rebuked by the Tsar, who replied in a rough and displeased tone, "I will decide." And at 4 o'clock Nicholas II authorized S. D. Sazonov to order the general mobilization.* Sazonov telephoned at once to the chief of staff, adding, according to one account, "So, my dear general, do your duty and disappear for the day,"† according to another, "Now you can smash your telephone."‡ To the end of his life M. Sazonov maintained the wisdom of his action.§

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* Schilling, pp. 64–65.

† Sazonov, pp. 202–203.

‡ Paléologue, I, 39.

At the time the minister told the French ambassador, and he has repeated the statement in his memoirs, that the Tsar was greatly influenced by a telegram from the German Emperor, in which he said that "if . . . Russia mobilizes against Austria, my rôle as mediator . . . will be endangered if not ruined."|| But as this was not sent from Berlin until 3.30 P. M., and was not received at Peterhof until 5.30, it obviously was not a factor.¶ Just as Francis Joseph had been tricked into signing the declaration of war against Serbia, so Nicholas II

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* Dobrorolski, p. 28, and Sukhomlinov, p. 365, give the hour as 1 P. M. and 1–2 P. M. respectively. But they wrote from memory, and the contemporary evidence points to 4 o'clock as the time.

† Dobrorolski, p. 28.

‡ Schilling, p. 66.

§ The fact that the mobilization was ordered at 4 P. M. proves that the incident of the *Lokal-Anzeiger* (see above, pp. 194–196) had nothing to do with the decisions of Sazonov and the Tsar. For Sverbeyev's telegram was not received until long afterward, although Sazonov, p. 198, asserts that it was received within two hours of despatch. In a letter of 25 March, 1927, Sazonov wrote: "It goes without saying that the announcement in the *Lokal-Anzeiger* did not cause our mobilization; this would have been impossible as is shown from the chronology of the events, but in our opinion it justified the step taken and considerably increased the anxiety which we all, and especially our military men, felt as a result of the rumors about military preparations in Germany which reached Petrograd from all sides and of the communications made by Pourtalès to the Foreign Office." M. T. Florinsky, "The Russian Mobilization of 1914," in *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII, 223, note 1 (June, 1927). Baron M. de Taube, *La politique russe d'avant-guerre et la fin de l'empire des Tsars*, p. 347, note 1, speaks of "a mysterious telegram received, it is said, during the morning of 30 July, by the Russian general staff from one of its agents in Berlin . . . which announced German mobilization . . . several hours before the extra edition of the *Lokal-Anzeiger*." He states that he received this information, "which serves to shift the moral responsibility of Sazonov to other persons," from General Golovin at a discussion on the origins of the war before the Russian lawyers' club in Paris on 10 November, 1927. But General Golovin, "La mobilisation russe a-t-elle été la cause de la guerre?" in *Le monde slave*, VI, i, 29 (January, 1929), says that "the Russian secret agents, having read the information [in the extra edition of the *Lokal-Anzeiger*], communicated as soon as possible with Petrograd by different ways and telegrams in conventional language." Presumably Taube misunderstood Golovin.

|| William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 30 July; G 420. See above, p. 188.

¶ Paléologue, I, 38; Sazonov, p. 203.

required a great deal of persuading before he consented to general mobilization.*

On receipt of the Tsar's order, General Yanushkevich instructed General Dobrorolski to secure once more the necessary signatures of the three ministers. This time there was no difficulty, for the ministers were in session at the Marie Palace, and by 5 o'clock the ukase had been signed. An hour later Dobrorolski began sending the historic message from the central office in St. Petersburg. It read:

> His Majesty orders: the army and navy to be placed on a war footing and to this end reservists and horses to be called up according to the mobilization plan of the year 1910. 18 [*i. e.*, 31] July is to be counted the first day of mobilization.
>
> Sukhomlinov, Minister of War.
> Grigorovich, Minister of Marine.
> Maklakov, Minister of the Interior.†

"This," remarks the general, "was the first moment of the great epoch." By 7 o'clock the telegram had been acknowledged from all principal centres. "A change was no longer possible."‡

For a moment M. Sazonov proposed to keep the mobilization secret and to make no public announcement, "in order to avoid rendering our relations with Germany more acute,"§ and doubtless also to escape the reproaches of the French ambassador and the French Government. But for technical reasons this was found impossible, and in the early morning hours of 31 July red posters announcing the mobilization were put up in St. Petersburg, while white posters proclaimed a state of siege in the city and its environs.||

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* Taube, pp. 364–365, quotes the Tsar as saying to him on 28 December, 1914, *à propos* of a lecture on diplomatic history before the Imperial Russian Historical Society on 26 March, 1914 (pp. 337–339): "In listening to your sombre words, I said to myself: 'Here is a professorial theorist who does not take account of the pacific spirit of his sovereign.' If there is ever a quarrel between Austria and us—so I then thought—it will only be under Alexey Nicholayevich [the heir to the throne]. And behold! four months later, *they* [*on*] forced me to engage in this terrible war!"

† Frantz, p. 265.

‡ Dobrorolski, pp. 28–29.

§ Schilling, p. 69.

|| Dobrorolski, p. 29.

During the evening of 30 July, M. Sazonov saw the German, French and British ambassadors. If the hour at which their respective telegrams were sent affords any clew, he talked first with Sir George Buchanan. The latter reported:

> It has been decided to issue orders for general mobilization. This decision was taken in consequence of report received from Russian ambassador in Vienna to the effect that Austria is determined not to yield to intervention of Powers, and that she is moving troops against Russia as well as against Servia. Russia has also reason to believe that Germany is making active military preparations, and she cannot afford to let her get a start.*

This was a straightforward communication to which the British Government, as a possible—and much desired—ally, was entitled. The report of the ambassador in Vienna was doubtless a telegram from M. Schebeko recounting his conversation of that day with Count Berchtold. The Austro-Hungarian minister had said that he had telegraphed Count Szápáry "to carry on the exchange of views begun with [M. Sazonov]," and had emphasized once more that "Austria had no aggressive designs against Russia." But, in spite of the friendly form of the conversation, M. Schebeko derived the impression that

> while Austria really wishes to reach an understanding with us, she does not consider it practicable to suspend her operations against Serbia until she has received full satisfaction and obtained adequate guarantees for the future.†

Thus matters stood just where they did a week before; and since the Russian Government had from the start declared that it would not permit an Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia, the intransigence of Vienna might properly be adduced to justify the general mobilization.*

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* Buchanan to Grey [?30] July, 6.40 P. M.; B 347. The telegram is dated 31 July, but in an editorial note the opinion is expressed that this must be wrong. Buchanan does not state that he saw Sazonov; but the presumption is that he did, or at least that he got his information from the foreign office.

† Schebeko to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; R, 1925 113. It will be remembered that Berchtold's instructions to Szápáry (A III 44; see above, p. 178) were quite uncompromising: "It has never been our intention to yield on any of the points contained in the note." Schebeko's impression was quite justified. His telegram, however, must have been received in St. Petersburg after Sazonov had decided on general mobilization.

Count Pourtalès came "toward evening" to repeat the request made that morning that Russia would not begin hostilities against Austria,† on the ground that the refusal of Vienna to enter into conversations with St. Petersburg must have been given before the German *démarche*.‡ His purpose seems to have been to conciliate the Russian minister, and the latter did promise that "Russia would refrain from hostilities for the time being, provided she received no provocation from Austria." But the conversation was evidently stiff, for the ambassador "could only come to the conclusion that Sazonov refuses, now as before, to withdraw from his position." Nothing was said about Russian mobilization, except that Sazonov hinted at "counter-measures" in reply to the alleged mobilization of the German fleet at Danzig.§ This, however, is hardly surprising, for obviously M. Sazonov had every reason to conceal the fact of general mobilization from Germany as long as possible.

After the German, the French ambassador saw the Russian foreign minister. M. Paléologue reported:

> In a conversation which he had this afternoon with Count Pourtalès, M. Sazonov was forced to the conclusion that Germany does not wish to pronounce at Vienna the decisive word which would safeguard peace. The Emperor Nicholas has received the same impression from an exchange of telegrams which he has just had personally with the Emperor William.
>
> Moreover, the Russian general staff and admiralty have received disquieting news concerning the preparations of the German army and navy. In consequence the Russian Govern-

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* For Russian reports of Austrian military measures in Galicia, see *Zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges*, II, Anlage 51, pp. 88–90.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 30 July; G 392. See above, p. 166.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, 30 July; G 397. See above, p. 166.

§ Pourtalés to Bethmann-Hollweg, telegrams, 30 July, 8.40, 9.50 P. M.; G 449, 459. Pourtalès, pp. 60–61.

> ment has decided to proceed secretly to the first measures of general mobilization.
>
> In informing me of this decision, M. Sazonov added that the Russian Government will none the less continue its efforts at conciliation. He repeated to me: "I shall negotiate until the last moment."*

Now it is not apparent why the conversation with Count Pourtalès should have led M. Sazonov to think that Germany was unwilling to speak at Vienna, for the ambassador had come expressly to say that his government was trying to influence its ally. Secondly, the Russian foreign minister concealed from the French ambassador that the general mobilization had been ordered and spoke merely of "proceeding secretly to the first measures." Such conduct was not loyal to either of the two ambassadors.

An explanation, though not a justification, is doubtless to be found in the information received during the day from Paris. On the one hand, the French Government had definitely asked its ally not to take any measures which would give Germany an excuse for partial or general mobilization.† On the other hand it had been intimated that France did not wish to interfere with Russia's preparations and was concerned only that they should not be provocative of Germany.‡ These communications offered the Russian minister a way out of his dilemma: by informing M. Paléologue that Russia would "proceed secretly to the first measures of general mobilization," he escaped the reproach of ignoring the formal advice of France and at the same time seemed to be doing what was actually desired. One would like to know, however, whether M. Paléologue did not learn from Sir George Buchanan that it had been decided to issue the order for general mobilization.

How reluctant M. Sazonov was to let the fact of mobilization become known is further revealed by his failure—so far as published documents show—to transmit the news to the Russian ambassadors abroad, although he had been careful to notify them of the partial mobilization. As late as 1 August M. Izvolski denied to the Austrian ambassador in Paris that he had heard of any mobilization beyond that of the thirteen corps intended to operate against Austria.*

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* Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 30 July, 9.15 P. M., received 11.25 P. M.; Poincaré, IV, 403. F 102 is incomplete.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; Romberg, p. 36. See above, p. 232.

‡ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; Romberg, p. 37. See above, pp. 232–233.

WAS THE RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION JUSTIFIED?

The real intentions of the Russian Government in ordering general mobilization may never be known. Two main arguments were presented to the Tsar. (1) The general staff was honestly alarmed by the prospect of general mobilization, which they considered was bound to come, being seriously interfered with by the progress of the partial measure. They were in the same position as Conrad von Hötzendorf, who insisted on knowing within five days whether he must convert the Austrian partial into a general mobilization. (2) The foreign office was convinced that Austria would make no concessions, that Germany would support Austria, that Germany herself was making preparations, and that war was inevitable. If so, then the sooner mobilization was effected, the better. Thus circumstances had brought General Yanushkevich and M. Sazonov, who were originally quite far apart, to the same point of view.

The hesitations of Nicholas II and the arguments of M. Sazonov show that they expected war as the consequence; in face of the German warnings of 26 July and 29 July, they could hardly expect anything else. On the other hand, the Tsar, in telegrams to the German Emperor,† and his minister, in conversation with both the German‡ and Austrian§ ambassadors, gave positive assurances that mobilization did not mean war, and that Russia was ready to negotiate for a pacific settlement. Even if they had little hope of such a settlement, they were probably sincere in their statements. But was not the dogma that "mobilization means war" a principle accepted by soldiers everywhere?

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* Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 91.

† Nicholas II to William II, telegrams, 31 July, 1 August; G 487, 546. See below, pp. 267, 324.

‡ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegrams, 29 July; G 343, 365, 378. See above, pp. 102–103. Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 536. See below, p. 316.

§ Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 19. See above, p. 104.

The idea was discussed during the negotiations for the Franco-Russian alliance. Article 2 of the military convention provided:

> In case the forces of the Triple Alliance or of one of the Powers which compose it should be mobilized, France and Russia, at the first indication of the event, and without a previous agreement being necessary, shall mobilize all their forces immediately and simultaneously, and shall transport them as near to the frontiers as possible.*

The Russian point of view was thus explained:

> General Obruchev [the then chief of the Russian general staff] emphasized finally the necessity of the immediate and simultaneous mobilization of the Russian and French armies at the first news received by either of the two countries of a mobilization of the forces of the Triple Alliance. He understands further that this mobilization of France and Russia would be followed immediately by positive results, by acts of war, in a word would be inseparable from an "aggression."†

The French point of view was not different. General Boisdeffre, the head of the French military mission which negotiated the alliance, said to the Tsar Alexander III:

> The mobilization is the declaration of war. To mobilize is to compel one's neighbor to do the same. Mobilization involves the execution of the strategic transportation and concentration [of the troops]. Otherwise, to allow a million men [to be concentrated] on one's frontier without doing the same thing

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* *L'alliance franco-russe*, p. 92; Pribram, English translation, II, 215. For the subsequent modification, providing for the case that only one Power of the Triple Alliance mobilized, see above, p. 239.

† Report of the French military attaché, 16 July, 1892; *L'alliance franco-russe*, p. 56.

> simultaneously, is to deprive oneself of all possibility of moving later; it means placing oneself in the position of an individual who, with a pistol in his pocket, lets his neighbor put a weapon to his forehead without drawing his own.

To this the Tsar replied: "That is exactly how I understand it."* Although the French and Russian generals assumed that Germany or Austria-Hungary would have mobilized first, their statements undoubtedly represented the conception of most soldiers that general mobilization meant war. And General Dobrorolski, the chief of the mobilization section of the Russian general staff in 1914, remarks:

> The choice of the moment [for general mobilization] is determined by a variety of political causes. But once the moment has been fixed, everything is settled; there is no retreat; it determines mechanically the beginning of the war.†

In keeping with this principle, an instruction, dated 12 March, 1912, was sent in April to the commander of the Warsaw military district as follows:

> A telegraphic command to order mobilization in the European military districts is, on account of the political complications on the western frontier, to be regarded as a command simultaneously to commence hostilities against Austria and Germany.‡

This would appear to settle the matter once and for all. On 21 November, 1912, however, it was decided to countermand this order because it "might lead to serious misunderstandings with those Powers, with which war or the opening of hostilities was not contemplated for some political reason or other, at least at the beginning."

> It may prove to be advantageous to concentrate [the army] without opening hostilities, in order not to deprive the enemy

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* Report of General Boisdeffre, 18 August, 1892; *ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

† Dobrorolski, p. 10.

‡ Frantz, Anlage 80, p. 234.

irretrievably of the hope that war may yet be avoided. Our measures can thus be masked by clever diplomatic negotiations, in order to allay the fears of our opponents as far as possible.*

This recommendation was approved by the Tsar on 26 June, 1913. For the future

commencement of hostilities was to be separated in form from mobilization, and the opening of hostilities was to be ordered by a separate telegram signed by the minister of war, giving the name of the enemy power and the time of beginning the war, or was to be made dependent on the action of the enemy.†

The purpose of this new arrangement was to permit the Russian Government to exert military pressure on Austria-Hungary during diplomatic negotiations, without resorting to war with that Power or with Germany; it enabled the Russian foreign minister to say that Russian mobilization "did not mean war," necessarily. It also explains M. Sazonov's disingenuous conduct in proposing that Germany should get negotiations started if Russia would stop her preparations and at the same time proceeding to accelerate the preparations. If the Central Powers agreed to negotiate, then every day would strengthen the Russian military position and weaken correspondingly the diplomatic position of Germany and Austria-Hungary; if they refused to negotiate or if the negotiations failed, then Russia would be so much the readier for war. Vienna and Berlin were placed at a real disadvantage, of that there can be no doubt.

When we pass from the details of the Russian mobilization to discuss the question of its justification, we are soon aware of the lack of any firm basis for judgment. As a sovereign state Russia was legally entitled to dispose of her troops within her own territory as she saw fit, and a hundred warnings from Berlin could not affect that right. If it suited German military convenience and advantage to maintain that "mobilization meant war," it was equally to Russia's interest to take the opposite view; and it would appear that law, so far as there was any, sustained the Russian contention. On the other hand, the Tsar, the chief of staff and the foreign minister knew that Russian mobilization would be followed by German mobilization and by war. From one point of view, then, the Russian statesmen 'willed the war' when in defiance of warnings from Germany they ordered general mobilization.* But were they called upon to surrender, at German behest and under open threat of war, what they considered a legitimate Russian interest? Their attitude was well expressed by what M. Sazonov said to the unhappy Tsar as he wrestled with the problem:

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* Frantz, Anlage 82, p. 236.

† Frantz, p. 47, Anlagen, 83–85, pp. 237–240.

> He could say to himself, with a full conviction of being right, that his conscience was clear and that he would not have to answer either before God or his own conscience or the Russian people for the bloodshed of the terrible war, thrust upon Russia and Europe by the ill-will of the enemy, determined to increase their power by enslaving our natural Allies in the Balkans, destroying our influence there and reducing Russia to a pitiful dependence upon the arbitrary will of the Central Powers.†

But would not Russia's historic and legitimate interests have been sufficiently safeguarded by the assurances that Austria-Hungary would not take territory for herself and would respect the sovereignty of Serbia? Perhaps, if the assurances had been trustworthy. But the German and Austrian documents prove that they were disingenuous. On the territorial side, the privilege of making frontier rectifications had been reserved, privately, by the Austro-Hungarian Government,‡ and General Conrad was intent on taking at least Belgrade and Shabats.§ Moreover, it is not possible to doubt that an informal understanding had been arrived at by the Austro-Hungarian ministers to distribute parts of Serbia to her Balkan neighbors.* Even M. Sazonov's remark to Count Szápáry that "he had let himself be convinced" of Austrian good faith on the matter of territorial disinterestedness† does not in the least prove that the Ballplatz intended to keep its promise.

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* It might also be said that the Austro-Hungarian statesmen 'willed the war' when in defiance of warnings from Russia they went ahead with their war against Serbia.

† Sazonov, p. 204.

‡ See above, I, 365.

§ Conrad, IV, 150.

So far as Serbian sovereignty was concerned, the Russian belief that the enforcement of the Austrian conditions would mean the 'vassalage' of the little kingdom seems to have been well founded. Count Berchtold informed Sir Maurice de Bunsen that "the mainsprings of the Austrian action lay far deeper than in any one or another of the demands contained in the note."‡ When Count Mensdorff explained to Sir Edward Grey, *à propos* of some remarks of the latter "as to the effect that the Austrian action might have upon the Russian position in the Balkans," that "before the Balkan wars, Servia had always been regarded as being in the Austrian sphere of influence,"§ the implication surely was that it was to be reduced again to that status. Even Count Pourtalès admitted to M. Sazonov that "it would be time enough to return to the question of sparing Serbia's sovereign rights when peace was concluded."|| General Conrad reveals that he would have demanded the demobilization and disarmament of the Serbian army,¶ and Count Stürgkh, the Austrian premier, proposed "by a deposition of the dynasty, a military convention and other corresponding measures, to bring Serbia into a relationship of dependency on the Monarchy."** These secret plans were not known at the time, but they were deeply suspected, because they were the obvious consequences of the policy which the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum announced. The Russian Government was entirely justified in refusing to believe the assurances of Vienna.

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* See above, I, 364–365; II, 125.

† Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 19. This admission seems to have been a mere talking-point of Sazonov, made merely to emphasize his fears for the sovereignty of Serbia (see above, p. 104). On the next day (see above, p. 240), he told Pourtalès that the "assurance of territorial disinterestedness on the part of Austria-Hungary did not satisfy Russia."

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 346.

§ Grey to Bunsen, 29 July; B 282.

|| Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 401.

¶ Conrad, IV, 62.

** Protocol of the council of ministers, 19 July; A I 26.

If, then, the Austro-Hungarian Government was contemplating not the mere punishment of Serbia for possible complicity in the crime of Sarajevo but a profound change in the political status of the Balkan peninsula, the Russian Government was entitled, both by the historic development of the Eastern Question for more than a century and by the political morality of 1914, to demand that its voice should be heard and its interests considered. Yet every Russian or British request had been ignored: extension of the time limit of the ultimatum, consideration of the Serbian reply, direct conversation with the object of reaching a compromise, a conference in London. And for all the statements of Germany that she was endeavoring to mediate, there was, on 30 July, no tangible result. That the conduct of M. Sazonov was tortuous and gave the Central Powers legitimate ground for complaint, is undeniable. It would also seem to be true that the Russian general mobilization could have been postponed for another twenty-four hours without serious military disadvantage.* Russia might therefore have waited to observe the effect of her partial mobilization on Austria-Hungary and then have proceeded to general mobilization in case Vienna still refused to negotiate. But inasmuch as the Austro-Hungarian Government actually did decline to make any concessions under the pressure of the partial mobilization and refused to follow the advice of both Germany and Great Britain, the result would not have been different had Russia postponed her final decision until Count Berchtold had shown his hand.

The conclusion of the matter appears to be as follows: When the Central Powers elected to inaugurate a policy which had for its object the solution of the Serbian question in their exclusive interest without regard to Russia, they invited a Russian protest, as indeed they very definitely recognized. They did not expect that protest to take the form of armed intervention—and their guess proved to be wrong. It is, therefore, in the last analysis, as much upon them and their refusal to make any genuine concession, as upon the shiftiness of M. Sazonov, that the responsibility for the Russian mobilization rests. This was the logical and the only reply possible to the policy of surprise with which the Austro-Hungarian and German Governments sought to overawe and even to terrorize Europe. And for Russia this may certainly be said: she announced at the very beginning that she would not tolerate an invasion of Serbia; when her warning was disregarded, she was as good as her word.

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* So Yanushkevich admitted to Sazonov; Sazonov, p. 200.

The Russian and Austro-Hungarian general mobilizations may be said to mark the end of the third act of the drama. In the last act, now about to begin, diplomacy gives place to ultimata and is overtaken by declarations of war.

CHAPTER XVIII

PEACE OR WAR?

Sir Edward Grey's Proposals, 30 July

The two preceding chapters have shown that the general mobilizations of both Austria-Hungary and Russia were determined upon without either government being aware of the decision of the other. The news of Russia's action did not reach the other capitals until Friday, 31 July; the Austro-Hungarian step was not known, except to Berlin, until Saturday, 1 August. The diplomatists were accordingly still free to seek for a pacific solution, and we have examined the action of the German chancellor on 30 July. On that same day the British foreign secretary, although discouraged by the failure of his previous proposals, came forward with new suggestions.*

Sir Edward Grey's sympathies, from the moment the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum had been published, had been with Serbia and Russia. Nevertheless, within certain limits, he had endeavored to work with Germany, and in spite of the rebuffs received, he did not credit the German chancellor and the German foreign minister with sinister motives.

> But now [he writes] something that had always been an uncomfortable suspicion in the background came to the front and took more definite and ugly shape. There were forces other than Bethmann-Hollweg in the seat of authority in Germany. He was not master of the situation; in negotiating with him we were not negotiating with a principal. Yet he was the only authority with whom we could negotiate at all.

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* Asquith, Grey and Haldane had discussed the situation the night before until 1 A. M., "trying to discover bridges and outlets." "It is one of the ironies of the case," recorded the prime minister, "that we, being the only Power who has made so much as a constructive suggestion in the direction of peace, are blamed by both Russia and Germany for causing the war." Oxford and Asquith, II, 9.

Colonel Edward M. House, President Wilson's private emissary and "a man of exceptional knowledge and wide experience," had spoken to him of his experiences in Berlin in the spring of 1914: "the air seemed full of the clash of arms, of readiness to strike," and the Emperor might not be able to resist the pressure of the forward party.* This had made a deep impression on Grey.

> From the moment that Bethmann-Hollweg vetoed a Conference, without qualification, without conditions or reservation suggested on which a Conference might be agreed to, I felt that he would not be allowed to make a peaceful end to the negotiations. Nothing short of a diplomatic triumph for Germany and humiliation for us and France and Russia would be accepted as a conclusion by the military forces. Such diplomatic triumph on the German side and humiliation on the other as would smash the Entente, and, if it did not break the Franco-Russian alliance, would leave it without spirit, a spineless and helpless thing.†

With such thoughts in his mind Sir Edward Grey was confronted on the morning of 30 July with the German chancellor's bid for British neutrality.‡ He has described his reactions:

> I read it through with a feeling of despair. The document made clear that Bethmann-Hollweg now thought war was probable. We were henceforth to converse upon how we should conduct ourselves in war, no longer how war could be avoided. But even that was not the worst feature introduced into new negotiations. The proposal made to us meant everlasting dishonour if we accepted it. . . .
>
> There was further matter for depression in this telegram. Did Bethmann-Hollweg not understand, could he not see that

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* Cf. C. Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House* (Boston, 1926), I, 235–275.

† Grey, I, 323–324; American edition, I, 313–314. On this same day, 30 July, William II was writing: "Either we are shamefully to betray our allies and *sacrifice* them to Russia—thereby breaking up the Triple Alliance, or we are to be attacked by the Triple Entente in common for our *fidelity to our allies* and punished, whereby they will satisfy their jealousy by joining in totally ruining us" (see above, p. 202).

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 29 July, received 30 July, 9 A. M.; B 293. See above, pp. 153–154.

he was making an offer that would dishonour us if we agreed to it? What sort of man was it who could not see that? Or did he think so badly of us that he thought we should not see it? Every thought the telegram suggested pointed to despair. But while there was still time one does not sit down under despair, only the effort to lift it must be big and the appeal must be big.*

Sir Edward Grey wrote a reply which he showed to the prime minister, Mr. Asquith, for approval, and sent to Sir Edward Goschen. The ambassador was to inform the German chancellor that his proposal could not "for a moment be entertained":

> He asks us in effect to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.
>
> From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France could be so crushed as to lose her position as a Great Power, and become subordinate to German policy without further territory in Europe being taken from her.
>
> But apart from that, for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France would be a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.
>
> The chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.

"We must preserve our full freedom," Sir Edward continued, "to act as circumstances may seem to us to require"; but he added that "the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is to continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe." And he concluded on a note which was new in European diplomacy and finally triumphed in the Treaties of Locarno eleven years later.

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* Grey, I, 326–327; American edition, I, 316–317. Crowe minuted on the telegram: "The only comment that need be made on these astounding proposals is that they reflect discredit on the statesman who makes them. Incidentally it is of interest to note that Germany practically admits the intention to violate Belgian neutrality but to endeavour to respect that of Holland (in order to safeguard German imports via the Rhine and Rotterdam). It is clear that Germany is practically determined to go to war, and that the one restraining influence so far has been the fear of England joining in the defence of France and Belgium." Crowe's deductions were entirely natural. Actually, up to the moment of making the proposals, the German Government had reckoned on British neutrality; see above, pp. 143, 155.

> And if the peace of Europe can be preserved, and this crisis be safely passed, my own endeavour would be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no hostile or aggressive policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea had hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has had for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the reaction and relief that will follow will make some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers possible than was possible before.*

It has been argued that the very suggestion of such a 'treaty of mutual guarantee' justified all the German suspicions of Entente policy: but a fair reading of the proposal can leave no doubt that the British foreign secretary quite honestly meant to hold out his hand to the German chancellor. "What I had written," he says, "represented my own feeling and my last hope."†

If Sir Edward Grey declined the German bid for British neutrality, he also resisted the pressure of the Entente Powers to obtain an alignment with themselves. When the French ambassador came to remind him of the letters exchanged in November, 1912, which provided for discussion between Great Britain and France "if either government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace,"‡ he evaded an answer until the following afternoon.§ Instead of responding to a new appeal from M. Sazonov for a declaration of solidarity,|| he told

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 30 July; B 303.
† Grey, I, 329; American edition, I, 319.
‡ See above, I, 49.
§ Grey to Bertie, 30 July; B 319. See below, pp. 286–288.
|| Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 29 July; Romberg, p. 30.

Count Benckendorff that he wished to continue the discussions between the Powers.* Far from taking an irrevocable position, the British minister continued to work for peace.

He had learned of the definite refusal of Austria-Hungary to open conversations with Russia, of the German demand that Russia cease her military preparations,† of the Russian intention "to commence preparations for general mobilization."‡ But in spite of these untoward developments, which brought war dangerously near, there still seemed to be some basis for discussions between the Powers. There was, on the one hand, M. Sazonov's formula, according to which he would engage to stop all military preparations if Austria agreed to eliminate from her ultimatum the points that violated Serbian sovereignty;§ on the other hand, there was the British suggestion of an Austrian occupation of Belgrade, to be followed by negotiations, which the German Government had adopted and was supporting at Vienna.|| Late on 30 July Sir Edward Grey combined these two ideas in a new formula:

> If Austria, having occupied Belgrade and neighbouring Serbian territory, declares herself ready, in the interest of European peace, to cease her advance and to discuss how a complete settlement can be arrived at, I hope that Russia would also consent to discussion and suspension of further military preparations, provided that other Powers did the same.

It was, he recognized, "a slender chance of preserving peace";¶ but it was an appeal to Russia to stay her hand, the first of its kind and made because Germany was at last willing to cooperate.** A copy of the telegram was given to Prince Lich-

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* Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegram, 30 July; R 64.

† Telegrams of Sazonov communicated by Benckendorff, 30 July; B 299, 300.

‡ Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 302, a.

§ Communicated by both Benckendorff and Buchanan; B 302, a, b. For the text, see above, p. 240.

|| See above, p. 159. The German acceptance is recorded in Bethmann-Hollweg's telegram to Lichnowsky, 30 July; G 439.

¶ Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 30 July; B 309.

** This was confirmed by news from Vienna. "French Ambassador hears from Berlin that German Ambassador at Vienna is instructed to speak seriously to Ausnowsky, who sent it on to Berlin.* It was communicated to Paris, and the French Government was asked to support the suggestion in St. Petersburg.† What more Sir Edward Grey could have done—apart, of course, from a declaration either of solidarity or of neutrality—is not apparent. It is certainly one of the tragic ironies that the prospects of Anglo-German cooperation, which might possibly have solved the crisis of July, 1914, and then have laid the foundations of a new era in Europe, were immediately destroyed by the events of the following day.‡

THE GERMAN ULTIMATA, 31 JULY

Shortly after midnight of 30 July General von Moltke had said that although he had received "two reliable reports" (presumably from secret service agents) of the Russian general mobilization, he must have "some further confirmation" as a justification for German mobilization.§ That confirmation was not immediately forthcoming. So at 7 o'clock the next morning the chief of staff telephoned to General Hell, the commander at Allenstein, in East Prussia, to inquire if he had news of Russian mobilization. Hell replied that "the red mobilization posters are stuck up in Mlava" and that he was "quite con-

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tro-Hungarian Government against acting in a manner calculated to provoke European war." Bunsen to Grey, telegram, 30 July, received 5 P. M.; B 307.

* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 460.

† Grey to Bertie, telegram, 30 July; B 310.

‡ The admiralty did not allow the diplomatic activity of the foreign office to interfere with its own preparations for war. On this day, 30 July, shippers of high-grade coals at Cardiff were informed that the government demanded first option on all shipments; a certain number of cargoes were taken over, and the customs officers were forbidden to extend information as to the destination and cargoes of colliers. Lathrop to Bryan, 30 July; US, p. 57. The harbor of Queenstown (Cork Harbour) was placed under martial law. Frost to Bryan, 31 July; US, pp. 58–59. The gunboats at Hankow and smaller naval vessels elsewhere in China were dismantled and their crews sent to Weihaiwei "where the more powerful vessels are being concentrated with a view to possible hostile action by Germany." MacMurray to Bryan, telegram, 31 July, 1 A. M.; US, p. 21. The military authorities appear to have taken precautions in the colonies. At Gibraltar the garrison was mobilized. Sprague to Bryan, telegram, 30 July; US, p. 20. In Jamaica the forts were manned and regiments hurried to Kingston, because the German cruiser *Dresden* was cruising off the three-mile limit. Bundy to Bryan, telegram, 30 July; US, p. 21. In British Guiana the governor called out the active and reserve force of Demerara. Chamberlin to Bryan, 30 July; US, pp. 56–57.

§ See above, p. 212. He had been urging the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' since the evening of 29 July.

vinced" of the mobilization, although he could not promise to secure one of the posters.* During the morning, news was received that the Russians had burned the cordon of houses along the German frontier, sealed up the public offices in the neighborhood, and carried off the money chests into the interior.† This, said Herr von Bethmann, "can only mean that Russia looks upon war as certain," and he was so taken up with the news that he made no remarks whatever on the reply of Sir Edward Grey to his bid for British neutrality which was read to him by Sir Edward Goschen, not even on the final paragraph, with its hint of a treaty of mutual guarantee.‡ At 11.40 A. M. came the news of the Russian general mobilization.§

It came just in time to justify the decision of the day before to proclaim 'threatening danger of war' not later than noon of 31 July. The fact that Sir Edward Grey was urging Russia to suspend her military preparations while mediation was arranged could now be lost sight of, and the situation looked upon only from a military point of view. The general staff had in 1913 discarded plans for a war against Russia alone, on the ground that such a war was wholly improbable;‖ the idea of an offensive against Russia, in the event of a war against the Dual Alliance, had been abandoned by General Count Schlieffen, Moltke's predecessor at the general staff, in 1894. Rightly or wrongly, General von Moltke had staked the safety of the German Empire on a single throw: to invade France by the Belgian route, defeat the French armies within six weeks, then withdraw strong German forces from the western front and hurl them against Russia whose armies, thanks to the vast expanse of the Russian territory and the paucity of railways, would be slow in mustering their full forces and would, while the German operations in France were proceeding, be attacked by Austria-Hungary. At the beginning of the campaign, enough troops were to be left in East Prussia to repel a Russian attack. When the German reinforcements arrived from France, the Austro-German armies would then seek to gain an effective decision against Russia. If Austria-Hungary was to play her part in this plan, there was no place, it may be noted, for General Conrad's campaign against Serbia with nearly half of his army.

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* Testimony of Major von Haeften, in Schulthess, *Europäischer Geschichtskalender*, 1917, p. 1000.

† Goschen to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 337.

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 336. Goschen to Bethmann-Hollweg, 31 July; G 497.

§ Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 473.

‖ *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 17. In similar fashion (see above, p. 94) the Russian general staff assumed that a war against Austria-Hungary alone was out of the question.

The German military authorities had supreme confidence in this plan.* But its complete success depended upon Germany being able to utilize the advantage in time which her superior organization and her superb railway system afforded her,† not to speak of laying hands on Liège. From the military point of view, it was necessary to begin the war at once, not because the Russian mobilization *per se* involved immediate danger to Germany,—the main Russian offensive was expected to move against Austria-Hungary, and East Prussia was sufficiently protected,—but because war with Russia meant war with France as well, and the sooner the German armies began the invasion of France, the greater the chances of victory. As a matter of fact, however, since the decision had already been made to send an ultimatum to Russia,* the importance of the news of Russian mobilization was less the fact itself than that (1) it provided a welcome motive for the ultimatum; and (2) it gave the soldiers, who for two days had been pressing for the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war,' an unanswerable argument in case the chancellor tried to evade his promise of the day before. In face of the Russian action, delay was, of course, no longer possible, and at 1 P. M. the 'state of danger of war' [*Kriegsgefahrzustand*] was publicly proclaimed, as the preliminary to mobilization.†

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* "Military circles here are in the best of spirits," the Bavarian minister declared. Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 31 July; Dirr, p. 176. During the evening he telephoned to Munich: "Prussian general staff looks forward to war with France with great confidence, counts on being able to conquer France in four weeks; no effective spirit in the French army, few guns fit for plunging fire, and poor small arms." Dirr, p. 172. "Germany is strong enough, unless some special misfortune should occur, to carry on such a war against Russia and France," so Moltke was reported to have said. Also, "he had decisively advised against purchasing the neutrality of England at the expense of sparing the territory of Belgium, even if this had been possible, which he did not believe." Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 5 August; Dirr, p. 188.

† The official exposition was phrased thus: "We could not wait quietly to see whether counsels of prudence prevail at St. Petersburg while Russian mobilization continued in full swing, as this would involve our being completely outstripped in military preparedness. If Russia continues to mobilize and we do not start to do so, East Prussia, West Prussia, and perhaps also Posen and Silesia are at the mercy of the Russians." Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 1 August; G 529. This might be true if German mobilization were delayed for a considerable period. But Moltke's plan for East Prussia allowed him a margin of several days (cf. Falkenhayn's statement, quoted above, p. 147, "It can be assumed that our mobilization, even if it follows two or three days later than the Russian and the Austrian, will still be completed more quickly than theirs"), while Posen and Silesia were protected by the offensive which the Austrian armies were to conduct in Russian Poland. The criticism is not meant to imply that German mobilization was not a natural and quite legitimate reply to Russian mobilization. Bethmann's statement was, however, an exaggeration of the military realities.

This involved military protection of the railways, prohibition of the publication of troops movements and military measures, the proclamation of the 'state of war,' the recall of all men on leave and of troops to their corps assignments, the control of freight traffic in frontier districts and the supervision of the postal service with foreign countries, the execution of precautionary measures for the protection of the frontiers, the transport of garrisons to the islands in the North Sea, and the evacuation of military storehouses in districts threatened with invasion.‡ Furthermore, according to General von Falkenhayn, the calling out of reservists was permitted.§ That it would be followed by mobilization was stated by the chancellor to the Prussian ministers on 30 July and by William II to Francis Joseph on 31 July.[*] But the exact moment of mobilization and the beginning of the war was not yet determined:[†] that depended on the development of the political situation.

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* See above, pp. 209–210.

† On the following day the Prussian ministry of war was said to be "very indignant over the day lost for the mobilization." Wenninger to war office, 1 August; Dirr, p. 228. This sounds as if the soldiers had urged mobilization on 31 July instead of 'threatening danger of war.' No doubt it would have been possible on 31 July to proclaim mobilization and announce 1 August as the "first day of mobilization"; but the normal procedure was first to proclaim 'threatening danger of war' and then mobilization. Probably the Prussian war office was complaining that 'threatening danger of war' had not been proclaimed on 30 July, as both Moltke and Falkenhayn had desired; had this been done, mobilization could easily have been ordered on 31 July.

‡ Montgelas, pp. 199–200; text in *KSF*, IV, 46–48 (January, 1926).

§ At the session of the Prussian council of ministers on 30 July, Falkenhayn stated that "the 'threatening danger of war' went further than 'security' [naval precautionary measure] if only because of the calling up of the reservists"; G 456.

Now the political situation of the German Government was exceedingly difficult. The plan of the general staff called not only for the seizure of Liège by a *coup de main*,[‡] but for the occupation of Luxemburg, which was to be the pivot of the German turning movement in Belgium and France, within a few hours of mobilization. Both Belgium and Luxemburg were neutral states, forbidden to German armies. But the German Government was prepared to violate that neutrality, on the ground of strategic advantage in the event of war with France. Unfortunately there was, on 31 July, no occasion for a quarrel with France; Herr von Jagow had said the day before that "he knew France did not desire war."[§] The German Government had therefore to force the situation as against France by means of an ultimatum to Russia which, were it rejected, would permit a declaration of war on Russia; to this France, under the obligations of her alliance, would be bound to reply, and to make this easier for her, an ultimatum was despatched simultaneously with that to Russia.[||]

As a preliminary the Emperor telegraphed once more to the Tsar:

> The responsibility for the disaster which is now threatening the whole civilized world will not be laid at my door. In this moment it still lies in your power to avert it. Nobody is threatening the honour or power of Russia who can well afford to

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[*] William II to Francis Joseph, telegram, 31 July; G 503.

[†] The Bavarian minister telephoned to Munich that mobilization would be ordered by midnight of 1 August, at the latest; Dirr, p. 172.

[‡] See above, p. 150.

[§] Goschen to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 305.

[||] The plan of sending an ultimatum to France had been explained to Conrad by Moltke as far back as 1910. Conrad, II, 59.

> await the result of my mediation. My friendship for you and your empire, transmitted to me by my grandfather on his deathbed, has always been sacred to me and I have honestly often backed up Russia when she was in serious trouble especially in her last war.
>
> The peace of Europe may still be maintained by you, if Russia will agree to stop the milit[ary] measures which must threaten Germany and Austro-Hungary.*

This appeal crossed with a telegram from the Tsar thanking William for his mediation, "which begins to give one hope that all may yet end peacefully." Nicholas tried to reassure his nervous cousin:

> It is technically impossible to stop our military preparations which were obligatory owing to Austria's mobilization. We are far from wanting war. So long as the negotiations with Austria on Serbia's account are taking place my troops shall not take any provocative action. I give you my solemn word for this.†

Was this promise sincere? Probably, so far as the Tsar himself was concerned. But did he speak for his government? Actually, it did not matter, for at last the Austro-Hungarian answer to the Anglo-German suggestions had come: a clear-cut refusal.‡ Since Austria declined to negotiate, it was to be expected that Russia would attack forthwith. So the German ultimata were despatched at 3.30 P. M. in the form of instructions to the ambassadors in St. Petersburg and Paris.

The note to Russia read:

> In spite of the still pending negotiations for mediation, and although we ourselves up to this hour have taken no mobilization measures of any kind, Russia has mobilized her entire

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* William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 31 July, 2.04 P. M.; G 480. Lichnowsky had suggested sending a telegram to the Tsar. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 469.

† Nicholas II to William II, telegram, 31 July, received 2.52 P. M.; G 487.

‡ Francis Joseph to William II, telegram, 31 July, received 2.45 P. M.; G 482. See above, p. 214.

> army and navy, that is, against us also. For the security of the empire, we have been compelled to proclaim 'threatening danger of war,' which does not yet mean mobilization. Mobilization must, however, follow, in case Russia does not within twelve hours suspend every war measure against us and Austria-Hungary and make to us a definite declaration to that effect. Please communicate this to M. Sazonov at once and telegraph the hour of communication. I know that Sverbeyev telegraphed yesterday to St. Petersburg that we had mobilized, which is not the case up to this moment.*

Thus the Russian Government was presented with the demand to renounce all military pressure on Austria-Hungary and to accept the Viennese policy toward Serbia. It was not expected that Russia would yield: "The Emperor Nicholas is hardly strong enough," the Bavarian minister was informed, "to put through the demobilization, without getting satisfaction from Austria-Hungary which, as things stand, is not to be had."†

The note to France ran thus:

> In spite of our still pending action for mediation and although we ourselves have taken no mobilization measures of any kind, Russia has ordered the mobilization of her entire army and fleet, that is, against us also. In consequence we have proclaimed 'threatening danger of war,' which must be followed by mobilization in case Russia does not within twelve hours suspend all war measures against us and Austria. Mobilization inevitably means war.‡ Please ask the French Government whether it intends [*will*] to remain neutral in a Russo-German war. Answer must be given within eighteen hours. Telegraph immediately hour at which question is asked.

Obviously the expectation was that France would reply with a statement of loyalty to her ally and that this would permit Germany to issue a declaration of war against France. "Utmost haste necessary," the ambassador was informed: the foreign office insisted that the demand to be made on Belgium for the passage of German troops could be justified only by the existence of a state of war between Germany and France;* since Belgium was to be invaded immediately, as soon as mobilization was ordered, there was no time to lose!

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, "urgent," 31 July; G 490.

† Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 31 July; Dirr, p. 174.

‡ This was not stated in the note to Russia, presumably it had already been said twice, on 26 July and again on 29 July (see above, pp. 8, 134).

But if, contrary to expectations, France should declare her intention to remain neutral, Baron von Schoen was to say that

> we shall have to demand the surrender of the fortresses of Toul and Verdun as a pledge of neutrality; these we would occupy and return after the completion of the war with Russia.

An answer to this proposal would have to reach Berlin by 4 P. M. on 1 August.† Just how such a suggestion could have been conceived by the German Government is not easy to understand. The German chancellor did indeed offer an explanation (after the war):

> If France had actually given a declaration of neutrality, we should have had to expect that the French army would have completed their preparations in every detail under the protection of an apparent neutrality, so as the better to fall upon us at such time as we might be deeply involved in the East. We had to have good guarantees against this, and the military authorities considered that an occupation of Toul and Verdun for the war would have sufficed. This military view had to be taken into account in instructing the ambassador.‡

But the explanation smacks of unreality, if not of untruth. As far back as December, 1912, Herr von Bethmann had told the Emperor that "it is certain that a war with Russia means for us a war with France also";§ and assuredly nothing had happened since to alter that conclusion! The German plan of campaign called for an invasion of France, and that plan had to be executed because on 31 July, 1914, there was no other plan available; the next day, as we shall see, Moltke explained to William and Bethmann that it would wreck the whole mobilization to turn the army against Russia and abandon the campaign against France. It is impossible to believe that "the military authorities considered that an occupation of Toul and Verdun would have sufficed," and there is not the slightest indication in any published document or in any military writings that the general staff suggested the plan or was cognizant of it. It gives the appearance of being a *gaucherie* of the chancellor, for the foreign office, without waiting for the French answer, drafted a declaration of war.*

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* Tirpitz, II, 13.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, "urgent," 31 July; G 491.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg, I, 165, note 1.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 18 December, 1912; *G. P.*, XXXIX, 9.

Theoretically the two ultimata left the door open for peace. Actually this was not the case. Even before launching the ultimata, Herr von Bethmann telegraphed to Vienna that Germany would mobilize within forty-eight hours, which "inevitably means war," and that "we expect from Austria immediate *active* participation in the war with Russia."† The Emperor sent a similar message to Francis Joseph:

> I am planning on 2 August as the first day of mobilization, and I am ready, in fulfilment of my obligations as an ally, to commence war at once against Russia and France. It is of the utmost importance in this grave struggle that Austria direct her principal forces against Russia, and not fritter away her strength by a simultaneous offensive against Serbia. This is all the more important because a great part of my army will be used against France.‡

Finally, the chief of staff, evidently alarmed by the statements of General Conrad that Austria, while proceeding to general mobilization, would continue her operations against Serbia and would not declare war on Russia,* sent a pressing message to his Austro-Hungarian colleague:

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* G 608.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 31 July, 1.45 P. M.; G 479. Cf. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegrams, 31 July; A III 55, 56.

‡ William II to Francis Joseph, telegram, 31 July, 4.40 P. M.; G 503. At 5 P. M., the Emperor received the Austrian military attaché. He sketched his efforts at mediation, revealed his hopes of getting allies,—Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and Italy,—said that he expected England to take part in the war, and urged Conrad to "use all available forces against Russia," and "resist the first offensive of Russia." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegrams, 31 July; A III 57, 58.

> Germany will announce mobilization of her entire armed forces probably on 2 August and undertake struggle with Russia and France. Will Austria leave her in the lurch?†

Thus every possible pressure was brought to bear on Austria-Hungary to make sure that she joined in the war.

This was reasonable, for Germany was going to war because of the policy adopted by her ally toward Serbia. Yet one cannot but be struck by the language of the German Emperor: he "was ready, in fulfilment of his obligations, to begin war at once on Russia and France."* The alliance bound Germany and Austria-Hungary to common action if either were 'attacked' by Russia, but on 31 July neither had been 'attacked,' whatever the Russian mobilization might be thought to imply about the future. To put it in another way: Germany, in order to bring Austria-Hungary into the war, was forced to announce that she would anticipate the *casus foederis* of the treaty! Given the determination of Austria to invade Serbia, of Russia to prevent this and of Germany and France to support their respective allies, the exact moment at which the decision was taken to appeal to the sword is probably of small consequence. But if the point be of importance, it would seem to be true that the German Government was the first among the Great Powers to decide formally, on the afternoon of 31 July, that the issue must be settled by immediate war.

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* See above, p. 184. Conrad's telegram, sent at 8 A. M., on 31 July, was received by Moltke at 10.45 A. M.; G 825. Francis Joseph had said much the same thing in his telegram to William II; G 482.

† T. von Schäfer, "Generaloberst von Moltke in den Tagen vor der Mobilmachung und seine Einwirkung auf Oesterreich-Ungarn," in *KSF*, IV, 539–541 (August, 1926). Conrad, IV, 155, gives only the last sentence of Moltke's message, which he describes as a telegram; according to Schäfer, it was sent by telephone. As it is unlikely that Moltke had forgotten his own advice to Conrad "not to declare war, but to await Russia's attack," there is additional reason for thinking that the advice had been dictated by tactical considerations only, in conformity with his plan to make Russia appear the aggressor. Conrad's reply to Moltke is illuminating. "Austria-Hungary has 'documented' her willingness for war by the general mobilization and the concentration which has been ordered in Galicia. My last communication was intended to meet the wishes of Germany that we should not start an attack on Russia but await her declaration of war. Also the telegram was sent at a moment when we were not yet informed of Germany's intentions with regard to mobilization and when it might be concluded, from Germany's negotiations with England, that she intended to settle the conflict peacefully. We were forced into war with Serbia, and Russia has mobilized; but to-day we are not yet sure but that Russia is only threatening, and therefore we cannot let ourselves be diverted from the action against Serbia. A quite different situation will arise if Germany informs us that she also intends to wage war." Conrad, IV, 155–156. Conrad evidently understood Moltke's tactics, but he did not intend to commit himself until he knew that Moltke had succeeded. When Moltke replied that Germany would declare war immediately if Russia did not cancel her military measures against Germany and Austria-Hungary, Conrad promptly declared, through the German military attaché, "Germany should have decided 24 hours earlier! She has put us in a very difficult position. Inform Berlin that we shall do everything in our power." Schäfer, *loc. cit.*, pp. 542–543. On 1 August Conrad wrote to Moltke that the assumption in Vienna had been that "if we were attacked by Russia, Germany would indeed fulfil her obligations as ally, but that she would prefer to avoid a general war." Therefore Austria had gone ahead with her plan to act against Serbia. "Only on 31 July did the positive declaration suddenly arrive that Germany was now willing herself to wage the great war against France and Russia. This created a *quite new situation*." Conrad, IV, 165. Moltke's reply went to the heart of the matter. "The difficulties which have confronted your Excellency in the last few days," he wrote on 2 August, "have been quite clear to me; but in spite of all my efforts, it was not possible for me to speed up the work of the diplomats and give your Excellency positive information earlier about our mobilization." Conrad, IV, 319. The clear meaning of this language is that from 29 July Moltke thought "the great war" inevitable and urged mobilization (no doubt in its two stages, 'threatening danger of war,' followed by mobilization) to meet it.

Having made up its mind, the Cabinet of Berlin decided to make a final effort to keep Italy in line. Encouraged perhaps by the denial of the Marquis di San Giuliano that there was an agreement between Italy and England according to which "neither country would undertake anything against the other in case of war,"† the German chancellor, when advising Rome of the ultimata to Russia and France, boldly declared that

> We are counting with assurance on Italy's living up to the obligations which she has assumed.‡

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* In the first draft of the telegram from William II to Francis Joseph, which was prepared in the foreign office, the Emperor was made to say: "I trust in God that He will even at the last hour send light to the Tsar and avert the frightful disaster which Russia's procedure threatens to bring upon the world." It was also stated that Germany would be compelled to mobilize if Russia did not suspend her military preparations, but nothing was said about beginning the war. G 502. The telegram actually sent was handed to the foreign office by an aide-de-camp of the Emperor, with orders to send it. Evidently the military authorities persuaded the Emperor to send the more emphatic and definite message.

† Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 458.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Flotow, telegram, 31 July; G 492. "It is expected of Italy," wrote the Bavarian minister, "that she will stick to the Triple Alliance, but

At the same time the Emperor begged Francis Joseph "to do everything possible to induce Italy to participate, making every possible concession."* Meanwhile the Duke of Avarna had hinted that "plain speech from Berlin to Rome would be in order."† So William II telegraphed to King Victor Emmanuel. After castigating Russia and announcing German mobilization as imminent unless Russia yielded, he said:

> War with Russia appears to me to be imminent and inevitable. I have just had the question put to Paris whether France would be willing to remain neutral in a Russo-German war. Unfortunately, there is no doubt about the answer.
>
> At this supreme moment, recollecting the ties of friendship and alliance that exist between us and our countries, my thoughts turn to you in complete confidence.‡

Had the Emperor known of the sentiments expressed about Italy that day in the ministerial council at Vienna, he would have been less confident that any kind of arrangement might be made.§

A similar effort was made with Rumania. Although King Carol had declined to send a telegram to the Tsar, as suggested by the Austro-Hungarian Government,|| he was trying, he said, to prepare Rumanian opinion for a possible war with Russia.¶ So the Emperor telegraphed an appropriate encouragement:

> At this grave hour my thoughts turn at once to you who have created a civilized nation on the eastern marches of

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that she wishes to use the opportunity to acquire something. Not Valona, however, which she refuses." Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 31 July; Dirr, p. 175. It is to be remembered that Jagow, in his correspondence with Vienna, had consistently taken the Italian position.

* William II to Francis Joseph, telegram, 31 July; G 503.

† Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 510.

‡ William II to Victor Emmanuel III, telegram, [31 July]; G 530. The Emperor told the Austro-Hungarian military attaché that he had sent the former German military attaché in Rome, Lieutenant-Colonel von Kleist, with a letter to the King of Italy "urgently demanding" that Italy mobilize her military and naval forces and send an army across the Alps, which he thought would make "a strong moral impression." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 58.

§ See above, pp. 218–219.

|| See above, p. 164.

¶ Waldburg to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 463.

> Europe and thereby erected a dam against the Slavic flood. I am confident that as a king and a Hohenzollern you will stand faithfully by your friend and unconditionally fulfil your obligations as an ally.*

Much more tangible argument was brought forward by the German Government:

> Should war with Russia prove unavoidable, the Imperial Government would, in the event of a favorable outcome, guarantee that Rumania should receive Bessarabia as a reward for fulfilling her obligations as ally and taking an active part in the war on our side.†

It was not known that Rumania was being tempted by equally attractive offers from the other side,‡ but the opinion in the Wilhelmstrasse was that "Rumania should at least remain neutral."§

If, however, both Italy and Rumania were uncertain, a new ally now offered itself. On 28 July the German Government had stated the terms on which it was willing to make an alliance with Turkey.|| But the stipulation that the treaty should be operative only in the event of a war between Russia and Germany was declared "wholly unacceptable" by the Turkish grand vizier, who demanded that the alliance be made absolute at least for the period of Liman von Sanders' contract, that is, until 1918.¶ Now that war with Russia was certain, Berlin did not hesitate and instructions were sent to the ambassador in Constantinople to sign the treaty on the Turkish terms "as soon as possible," provided Turkey could and would "undertake any action against Russia worthy of the name."**

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* William II to Carol, telegram, 31 July; G 472.

† Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 31 July; G 506. The Austrian Government was asked to give a similar pledge. Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 31 July; G 507.

‡ See below, pp. 315, 424.

§ Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 31 July; Dirr, p. 175.

|| G 320; see above, p. 131, and below, p. 434.

¶ Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 411.

** Bethmann-Hollweg to Wangenheim, telegram, "urgent, secret," 31 July; G 508. Germany promised to urge Austria-Hungary and Italy to join the new alliance.

Finally, an appeal was made to Greece. As early as 25 July the Greek Government had stated that it would not participate in the Austro-Serbian conflict; on the other hand, "the maintenance of the peace of Bucharest was a cardinal principle with Greece," that is, Greece would assist Serbia against a Bulgarian attack.* This was confirmed two days later by King Constantine, who said that he "would not take the side of Austria against the Slavs" in the event of a Turco-Bulgarian *rapprochement* and appealed for German help in the pending Greco-Turkish negotiations.† But after Bulgaria had informed both Vienna and Athens that it would remain neutral,‡ Germany was in a position to act. William II replied to King Constantine that "all the Balkan nations will have to make their choice" if a general war broke out.

> From the point of view of what is useful to the interests of Greece, it seems to me that the place for your country and your dynasty is at the side of the Triple Alliance. Even Serbia, which cannot be saved from her fate even by Greek support, will understand that it is *force majeure* which determines the attitude of Greece. No nation has regarded Greece's remarkable rise under your leadership with more envious eyes than has Russia. Never will there be a better opportunity than now for Greece, under the mighty shield of the Triple Alliance, to cast off the hegemony which Russia is trying to impose on the Balkans.§

Probably no great hope was entertained of this appeal, for Vienna and Rome were informed that "we are attempting to keep Greece from taking part against the Triple Alliance."|| Thus within a few hours after the despatch of the ultimata to Russia and France, steps were taken in four directions to

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* Bassewitz to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 189.

† Constantine to William II, telegram, 27 July; G 243.

‡ Szögyény to German foreign office, 28 July; G 305. Bassewitz to foreign office, telegrams, 28 and 30 July; G 336, 436.

§ William II to Constantine, telegram, 31 July; G 466, 504. The Emperor added that if Greece joined the other side, "our personal relations [they were brothers-in-law] would probably have to suffer forever as a result."

|| Jagow to Tschirschky and Flotow, telegrams, 31 July; G 501.

secure military assistance, which, if natural enough, testify to the resolution and determination of the German Government. It remains to notice the attitude adopted toward Great Britain.

When the German fleet returned from Norway on 29 July, it was kept dispersed between Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, most of the ships being in the Baltic. At 6 P. M. on 30 July a report was received from the naval attaché in London stating that the British fleet was in the North Sea moving northward.* The next morning the German admiralty staff began to transfer the German squadrons, and at 1 P. M. the order was issued "to accelerate as much as possible the concentration of all naval fighting forces in the North Sea against England"; the concentration was accomplished during the afternoon.† At 5 P. M. the staff telegraphed to the fleet:

> Threatening danger of war Great Britain, Russia and France. Allies Austria-Hungary and probably Italy.‡

Thus the German fleet was brought to the same level of preparedness as the Germany army.

The chancellor, however, seems not to have given up hope that Great Britain might still be induced to remain neutral. When informing London of the ultimatum to Russia, he said, as if to blacken the Russians:

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* Tirpitz, II, 6.

† Tirpitz, II, 5. Probably this step was taken at the instance of the foreign office, for a representative of the naval staff was asked during the morning, in the presence of Jagow, "if our fleet was ready to attack the English"; *ibid.*, II, 10. At noon the Emperor addressed a "most secret" and confused communication to the navy department and the naval staff. After expressing the opinion that "the whole crisis has been caused by *England alone* and can be solved by *England alone* (through pressure on the allied Russians and Gauls)," he recited how Great Britain and Germany were supporting identical terms of mediation, and concluded: "Diplomatic conversations have finally begun between Vienna and Peterhof, and Peterhof has also begged London for mediation. In Petersburg, according to to-day's report from the ambassador, there is absolutely *no* enthusiasm for war, on the contrary a feeling of depression; for yesterday evening there were many violent street fights between revolutionaries and troops, while at court and in the army there was the mood of a sick tom-cat [*Katerstimmung*] where they have come to their senses and are scared over what they have started and may yet start with their premature mobilization." William II to navy department and naval staff, 31 July; G 474. Tirpitz read this to Bethmann, and protested against the Emperor's view that the key to the situation lay in St. Petersburg, rather than in London. "We ought to make a deal with Russia," he urged; at least the way should be left open to mediation. The chancellor replied that it was too late, because of the Russian mobilization. Tirpitz, II, 10–11.

‡ Groos, *Der Krieg in der Nordsee*, p. 25.

> I do not consider it impossible that the Russian mobilization can be traced to rumors rife here yesterday—absolutely false and at once officially denied, but reported to St. Petersburg as fact—that mobilization was taking place here.*

A little later he despatched a statement of German mediation at Vienna, which, he said, "had gone to the utmost limit of what we could venture toward a sovereign state which is our ally."

> Our proposals to Vienna were entirely in line with the English proposals, which we recommended to the serious consideration of Vienna. They were being considered at Vienna this morning. During the discussion and before it had even been concluded, Count Pourtalès reported officially the mobilization of the entire Russian army and navy. This action on the part of Russia cut short Austria's pending reply to our proposal for mediation. It also affects us, that is, the Power whose mediation had been personally solicited by the Tsar. We are compelled, unless we are willing absolutely to sacrifice the safety of our fatherland, to answer this action, which we could not regard as other than hostile, with serious counter-measures.

Therefore, he explained, Russia had been given twelve hours in which to suspend her military preparations, and France had been asked whether she would remain neutral in a Russo-German war.†

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg was trying to destroy British confidence in Russian good faith, and we shall see that the British Government accepted his statement at face value. Yet the basis of his argument was untrue. The Russian general mobilization was not known at Vienna when the proposals for mediation were rejected. It is possible that the German chancellor was not aware of this fact; but the telegram of Francis Joseph to the German Emperor, which announced the refusal of the proposals,* gave as the explanation of the refusal and of the Austro-Hungarian general mobilization the fact that "the Emperor of Russia had ordered the mobilization of all the military districts along my frontier," and this telegram was despatched at 1.06 P. M., only little more than an hour after Berlin had learned of the Russian mobilization. In the ultimatum to Russia, it was not alleged that the Russian action had prevented Austria-Hungary from accepting the proposals for mediation. Although the charge cannot be proved, it does look as if the German chancellor was guilty of deliberate misrepresentation in his statement to the British Government. Incidentally, Prince Lichnowsky was instructed to "use every means to insure that this course of events is duly recognized in the English press."

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 31 July; G 488. Cf. B 344.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 31 July; G 513. Cf. B 372.

In a third telegram the chancellor sought to defend the German action from the point of view of military necessity and to discount the effect of the Tsar's promise that his troops would take no "provocative action."†

> That cannot fail to have its effect in England, if it should become known there, but it does not affect the matter. A Russian army mobilized on our frontier without our having mobilized is a deadly menace to us even without any "provocative action." The provocation of which Russia is guilty toward us in having mobilized against us when we were mediating in Vienna at her request, is in itself so strong that no German would understand it if we did not answer it with strong measures.‡

The "strong measures" were intimated to be German mobilization; it was not stated that mobilization meant war, although this had been previously affirmed. The purpose of the communication was obviously to soften if possible the impression which the German ultimata were bound to make in London and to present the German action in the best possible light. But even at the time of sending it the opinion of the foreign office was that "England goes with the Entente."*

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* G 482, received 2.45 P. M.; see above, p. 214.

† G 487; see above, p. 267.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 31 July; G 529. Cf. B 397.

THE DILEMMA OF GREAT BRITAIN

France had formally resolved, on the evening of 29 July, to fulfil the obligations of her alliance with Russia, and began on the following day to make overtures for the assistance of Great Britain. As we have seen, M. Viviani instructed the ambassador in London to ask Sir Edward Grey if the moment had not come for the two governments to consider, according to the letters exchanged in November, 1912, whether they should act together and what action they should take.† If the British Government agreed to joint action, then the plans of co-operation worked out between the French and British general staffs could be put into operation; and since the French strategy had been devised in the hope that British assistance would be forthcoming, it was essential to know if this help would be rendered in fact. To facilitate his task of persuading the British Government, M. Paul Cambon was provided with a statement of the military measures taken by Germany and France respectively, which were summarized thus:

> Although Germany has made her covering dispositions a few hundred of metres or less from the frontier along the whole front from Luxembourg to the Vosges and has moved her covering troops to their war positions, we have not done so, in spite of the fact that our plan, conceived in the spirit of the offensive, provides that the war position of our covering troops should be as close to the frontier as those of the German troops. We are thus leaving a strip of our national territory undefended against a sudden aggression.
>
> We are *not* doing this *for any other reason* than to prove to

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* Lerchenfeld to Hertling, private, 31 July; Dirr, p. 175.

† See above, pp. 233–234.

the British Government and the British public that France and Russia will not begin fighting [*tireront les premières.*]*

This struck a new note. Hitherto the appeals addressed to the British Government (by M. Sazonov) had been based on the argument that if Great Britain took her stand firmly with France and Russia, there would be no war.† Now war was considered so probable that British assistance was being indirectly invoked. Such a *démarche* was decidedly inconvenient to the British foreign secretary. Personally, he wished to support France if war came, not because of any commitments, but on the ground of British interests:

> To stand aside would mean the domination of Germany; the subordination of France and Russia; the isolation of Britain; the hatred of her by both those who feared and those who wished for her intervention in the war; and ultimately Germany would wield the whole power of the Continent.‡

But three-quarters of the members of the cabinet were anxious "not to allow themselves to be drawn into a European quarrel, unless Great Britain herself were attacked."§ Sir Edward Grey understood this fully:

> Some pro-French feeling there was—quite a substantial touch of this as there was of anti-German feeling; but it was not enough to outweigh the general desire to keep out of war.||

In addition, the Liberal press was almost unanimously advocating a policy of neutrality.¶

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* Viviani to P. Cambon, telegram, 30 July; B 319, enclosure. (The version in F 106 has been 'improved.') Among the details the French Government mentioned the calling up of individual reservists, the recall of reservists residing abroad, and the summoning of reserve officers to duty. The Germans do not admit that such steps were taken. The information received by the French up to 30 July is given in *Les armées françaises*, I, 72–78; see above, pp. 225, 234.

† See above, I, 500, 502; II, 90.

‡ Grey, I, 336–337; American edition, I, 326.

§ Churchill, p. 199; American edition, p. 211.

|| Grey, I, 335; American edition, I, 325.

¶ Scott, pp. 215–246, *passim*. Two articles from the *Daily Chronicle* of 29 July are reproduced in G 382.

Various arguments were adduced by the opponents of intervention. The chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, put forward the economic objection:

> He had been consulting the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, other men of light and leading in the city, also cotton men, and steel and coal men, etc., in the north of England, in Glasgow, etc., and they were all *aghast* at the bare idea of our plunging into the European conflict; how it would break down the whole system of credit with London as its centre, how it would cut up commerce and manufacture—they told him—how it would hit labour and wages and prices, and, when the winter came, would inevitably produce violence and tumult.

This was supported by the veteran president of the council, Lord Morley, on somewhat philosophic grounds:

> In the present temper of labour, this tremendous dislocation of industrial life must be fraught with public danger. The atmosphere of war cannot be friendly to order, in a democratic system that is verging on the humor of '48.

Lord Morley also emphasized "the Russian side of things":

> "Have you ever thought," I put to them, "what will happen if Russia wins? If Germany is beaten, and Austria is beaten, it is not England and France who will emerge pre-eminent in Europe. It will be Russia. Will that be good for Western civilization? I at least don't think so. If she says she will go to Constantinople, or boldly annex both northern and neutral zone in Persia, or insist on railways up to the Indian and Afghan frontier, who will prevent her?* Germany is unpopular in England, but Russia is more unpopular still. And people will rub their eyes when they realize that Cossacks are their fellow victorious champions for Freedom, Justice, Equality of man (especially Jew man), and respect for treaties (in Persia, for instance)."†

For days the great debate raged.

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* It will be remembered that it was exactly the situation in Asia which caused Nicolson, Crowe and Buchanan to advocate solidarity with Russia. See above, pp. 37–38, 42.

† Morley, *Memorandum on Resignation*, pp. 5–6.

The decision taken on 28 July "to initiate the precautionary stage in the preparations for war" evoked the "keen disapproval" of Lord Morley and his friends, but the clerk of the privy council was told that "at this stage it is not certain where the preponderance will lie."* As the possibility of war became probability, the anti-intervention party grew more active and determined. To quote Lord Morley:

> Harcourt had been busy in organizing opinion among his cabinet colleagues in favour of neutrality. This was meant for a counter-move to that which was being openly worked with his best dæmonic energy by Winston [Churchill], with strenuous simplicity by Grey, and *sourdement* by the Lord Chancellor —the Prime Minster seeing and waiting. There was no intrigue about it either way. All was above board. Harcourt got me to his rooms in the House of Commons one night as I was passing along the corridor and I found Beauchamp, M'Kinnon Wood, Hobhouse, Pease, very zealous against extension of entente to alliance. They calculated to a tune of eight or nine men in the Cabinet likely to agree with us.†

But no one "tried to force a decision while there was still any hope of peace."‡ Also, according to Lord Morley, "the Cabinet for the first time became seriously uneasy about the danger of these foreign affairs to our own cohesion."§ There was, so to speak, a decision by default. The hands of the foreign secretary were effectively tied:

> It was clear to me that no authority would be obtained from

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* Sir Almeric Fitzroy, *Memoirs* (London, [1925]), II, 557.

† Morley, p. 4. Lord Beaverbrook, *Politicians and the War* (London, 1928), I, 22–30, gives the alignment as follows: Grey and Churchill were solid for intervention; Lloyd George and Harcourt were for peace, but were prepared to leave the door open in case it became necessary to intervene; Morley, Burns, Simon, Beauchamp and Hobhouse desired an unconditional declaration of neutrality; Crewe, McKenna and Samuel were not committed to either side. Premier Asquith leaned toward Grey and Churchill, but was chiefly anxious to maintain the unity of the government, in which he was strongly supported by Crewe. Morley, p. 9, records that at a dinner which he gave for Lord Kitchener on 29 July, Lord Bryce "was shocked at Haldane's war talk."

‡ Grey, I, 333; American edition, I, 323. "There was complete agreement in the Cabinet upon every telegram sent by Sir Edward Grey and in his handling of the crisis." Churchill, p. 214, American edition, p. 228.

§ Morley, p. 7.

> the Cabinet to give the pledge for which France pressed more and more urgently, and that to press the Cabinet for a pledge would be fatal: it would result in the resignation of one group or the other, and the consequent break-up of the Cabinet altogether. . . . There was also more than the division of opinion in the Cabinet to be taken into account. There was division in Parliament and in the country.*

Thus British policy, far more than that of any other country, had to be guided and determined by events.

The first indication of what Great Britain might do was contained in the private warning conveyed to the German ambassador by Sir Edward Grey on the afternoon of 29 July.† The foreign secretary communicated this to the French ambassador, in order to escape the pressure of M. Cambon;‡ but since "he had to try to make the Germans feel that we were to be reckoned with, without making the French or Russians feel that they had us in their pockets,"§ he endeavored to minimize the significance of his action:

> Public opinion here [he told M. Cambon] approached the present difficulty from quite a different point of view from that taken during the difficulty as to Morocco a few years ago. . . . In the present case the dispute between Austria and Servia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand.

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* Grey, I, 334–335; American edition, I, 324.

† See above, p. 160. "I was . . . told at the time . . . that some emissary of the Potsdam Pacifist Party in our Cabinet, either of his own motion or at the instigation of certain Ministers who were then busily intriguing against their colleague at the Foreign Office, took upon himself to inform the German Embassy—probably von Kühlmann, who was very thick at the time with our pro-German politicians and pro-German journalists—that Sir Edward Grey's declarations need not be taken too seriously, as, owing to dissensions in the Cabinet, it would be impossible for him to carry a majority of his colleagues on any war policy." L. J. Maxse, *Politicians on the Warpath* (London, [1920]), p. 46. The communication, however, had no effect, for Lichnowsky's report of the conversation with Grey did not attempt to minimize the warning, which produced a devastating effect in Berlin (see above, p. 170).

‡ "France and Russia urged, with undeniable force, that even if we could promise nothing to them, we should not give Germany the impression, or let her be under the impression, that we should certainly stand aside." Grey, I, 340; American edition, I, 330. It was only by telling Cambon of what he intended to say to Lichnowsky that Grey could meet the reproach of leaving Germany under an illusion.

§ Churchill, p. 200; American edition, p. 212.

> Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it. . . . If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. France would then have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing to her alliance, her honour and her interest obliged her to engage. We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide what British interests required us to do.*

There was no change on the following day, 30 July, when M. Paul Cambon, as instructed, reminded Sir Edward Grey of the letters of 1912 and presented the statement purporting to show that German military preparations were more advanced than those of France. Although the ambassador anticipated that

> the aggression would take the form of either a demand that France should cease her preparations or a demand that she should engage to remain neutral if there was war beween Germany and Russia,

the foreign secretary would only say that "the Cabinet was to meet to-morrow morning, and I would see him again to-morrow afternoon."†

Before the cabinet met, an appeal was received from the President of the Republic, M. Poincaré. The French ambassador in Berlin, disturbed by the cautious language of his British colleague,‡ was urging that "a declaration envisaging the eventuality of an attack on France" should be made by the British Government to Germany.* On the evening of 30 July M. Poincaré put this point of view to the British ambassador, who had come to present Sir Edward Grey's congratulations on the success of the visit to Russia. He was convinced, he said, that

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* Grey to Bertie, 29 July; B 283. For the ambassador's report, see P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 29 July; Poincaré, IV, 377. According to him Grey said that "we are secretly taking certain military measures."

† Grey to Bertie, 30 July; B 319. For the ambassador's report, see P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 433–434. According to the version in F 108, Grey agreed with Cambon that "the moment has come to consider and discuss together every hypothesis"; possibly this was stated in a later telegram.

‡ "Jules Cambon is continually scolding me about England keeping her intentions so dark and says that the only way by which a general war can be prevented is by Sir E. Grey's stating *carrément* that England will fight on the side of France and Russia. But I tell him that a statement to that effect at the present stage, while it might cause Germany to hesitate, might equally urge Russia on; and if Russia attacked Austria, Germany would have to cut in whether she feared the British fleet or not." Goschen to Nicolson, private, [30] July; B 677.

> preservation of peace between Powers is in hands of England, for if His Majesty's Government announce that, in the event of a conflict between Germany and France, resulting from present differences between Austria and Servia, England would come to aid of France, there would be no war, for Germany would at once modify her attitude.

Sir Francis Bertie replied that personally he was of the same opinion,† but that it would be very difficult for the British Government to make such an announcement,‡ and held out no hope. M. Poincaré could only say that "if there were a general war on the continent England would inevitably be involved in course of it, for protection of her vital interests," and to affirm that France was pacific.§

Sir Eyre Crowe described the dilemma of Great Britain neatly enough in his minute on this report:

> What must weigh with His Majesty's Government is the consideration that they should not by a declaration of uncon-

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* J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 415–416.

† Poincaré, IV, 417. Cf. Bertie, I, 4.

‡ He did not explain his reasons for his opinion, which had nothing to do, apparently, with the dissensions in the cabinet. "People do not realize or do not take into account the difficulty for the British Government to declare England *solidaire* with Russia and France in a question such as the Austro-Servian quarrel. The French instead of putting pressure on the Russians to moderate their zeal expect us to give the Germans to understand that we mean fighting if war breaks out. If we gave an assurance of armed assistance to France and Russia now, Russia would become more exacting and France would follow in her wake." Bertie to Grey, private, 30 July; B 320, a.

§ Bertie to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 318. For a fuller account, Bertie to Grey, 30 July; B 373. The President said that France "has not gone farther at present than to make preparations for mobilization so as not to be taken unawares." That was not inconsistent with the opinion of the British military attaché that "all precautions prior to a mobilization have been carried out and it now only remains for the button to be pressed for the necessary reservists to be called up"; B 321. Both statements were known to the foreign office on 31 July.

> ditional solidarity with France and Russia *induce* and *determine* these two Powers to choose the path of war.
>
> If and when, however, it is certain that France and Russia cannot avoid the war, and are going into it, my opinion, for what it is worth, is that British interests require us to take our place beside them as Allies, and in that case our intervention should be immediate and decided.

But the cabinet did not agree with him. In the session of 31 July, the trend seemed to be in the opposite direction:

> I learnt from Arthur Nicolson [wrote the clerk of the privy council] that in spite of Edward Grey's misgivings and the more strongly expressed dissent of Winston Churchill, no decision was reached in favour of any further precautionary steps. Indeed the disposition of Ministers was hardening into resistance to the demand for mobilization, the large majority being wholly opposed to such a step.*

The soldiers "began to suspect that the Cabinet was going to run away," and spent "an awful day."† The immediate result was that the chief politicians of the Unionist party began that very night to discuss what they might do in the situation.

The interview between Sir Edward Grey and M. Paul Cambon was accordingly "rather painful."‡ The ambassador referred to a telegram from his brother in Berlin,§ saying that "it was the uncertainty with regard to whether we should intervene which was the encouraging element in Berlin."|| The charge was denied by the British foreign secretary:

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* Fitzroy, II, 558. "Of course everybody longs to stand aside, but I need not say that France, through Cambon, is pressing strongly for a reassuring declaration." Oxford and Asquith, II, 10.

† Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Bart.*, I, 152–153. Wilson, who was director of military operations in the war office, saw the French military attaché and "advised to get Cambon to go to Grey to-night and say that, if we did not join, he would break off relations and go to Paris"!

‡ So Grey told Asquith. Oxford and Asquith, II, 10.

§ J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, "very urgent," 31 July, received 3 A. M.; Poincaré, IV, 434–435.

|| So far as the German documents show, this was not the case; but the real opinions of the Wilhelmstrasse were no doubt concealed from the French ambassador.

> It was quite wrong to suppose that we had left Germany under the impression that we would not intervene. I had refused overtures to promise that we should remain neutral. I had not only definitely declined to say that we would remain neutral; I had even gone so far this morning as to say to the German ambassador that, if France and Germany became involved in war, we should be drawn into it.*

But on the main issue, there was nothing new: "We could not," said Sir Edward Grey, "give any pledge at the present time"; and he fell back on the argument of Mr. Lloyd George:

> The commercial and financial situation was exceedingly serious; there was danger of a complete collapse that would involve us and everyone else in ruin: and it was possible that our standing aside might be the only means of preventing a complete collapse of European credit, in which we should be involved.†

He could not give the ambassador much comfort.

> Though we should have to put our policy before Parliament [he went on to say], we could not pledge Parliament in advance. Up to the present moment, we did not feel, and public opinion did not feel, that any treaties of this country were involved.‡ Further developments might alter this situation

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* See below, p. 289.

† On reading a report from Sir F. Oppenheimer, the commercial attaché to the British embassy in Berlin (B 322), which stated that "outside the Bourses there have been so far [29 July] no signs of a panic," Crowe minuted: "A great contrast to the panic here." In his opinion "the panic in the city has been largely influenced by the deliberate acts of German financial houses, who are in at least as close touch with the German as with the British Government, and who are notoriously in daily communication with the German Embassy." Crowe to Grey, 31 July; B 369. "It must be noted," Cambon had already reported to Paris, "that for several days powerful German influences working through City financiers of Germanic origin are at work on the press and Parliament." P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 434. Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, II, 8–9, gives evidence of attempts by German banking interests to influence the *Times*, which caused him to exert himself to bring about some kind of co-operation between the Unionist opposition and the Liberal government. "All financial, business and industrial centres in the north of England are against war," so the Russian ambassador was informed. Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 149.

‡ The Russian ambassador thought that Grey saw the situation "very clearly," but public opinion was inclined to regard the issue as "purely Slavic." The government could not go faster than public opinion. "The crisis will be reached only

and cause the Government and Parliament to take the view that intervention was justified.

And to M. Cambon's argument that "in 1870 we had made a great mistake in allowing an enormous increase of German strength," Sir Edward had to reply that "at the present moment the only answer I could give was that we could not undertake any definite engagement." It is no wonder that the ambassador "expressed great disappointment."*

But he was able to inform his government that Sir Edward Grey, "who is a partisan of immediate intervention," would renew the discussion in the cabinet on the following day. Likewise, the British Government had raised the question of Belgian neutrality,† which was far more significant than the official reserves of the foreign secretary. Furthermore, Messrs. L. S. Amery and L. J. Maxse, two leading Conservative politicians, had called during the day at the embassy, where also Mr. Wickham Steed, the foreign editor of the *Times* and a stalwart champion of intervention, was also a constant visitor.‡ If the game was not yet won, from the French point of view, it was not yet lost.

During the day reports from British agents§ and informa-

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when the European aspect of the situation is made evident as a result of an attack on France." He urgently requested instructions, as a false move on his part would paralyze the efforts and good will of Grey. Benckendorff to Sazonov, telegrams, 31 July; R, 1925 148, 150.

* Grey to Bertie, 31 July; B 357. A telegraphic summary was also sent; B 352. For the ambassador's report, P. Cambon to Viviani, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 441–442, which is not altogether identical with F 110. "M. Cambon stated to Sir E. Grey that he must refuse to transmit such an answer to his Government. A few minutes later, white and speechless, he staggered into Nicolson's room. Nicolson went toward him and took his hand to guide him to a chair. 'Ils vont nous lâcher' was all that the ambassador could say. Nicolson went upstairs to interview Sir E. Grey. He found him pacing his room, biting at his lower lip. Nicolson asked whether indeed it was true that we had refused to support France at the moment of her greatest danger. Grey made no answer beyond a gesture of despair. 'You will render us,' Nicolson said angrily, 'a by-word among nations.' He then returned to M. Cambon." Quoted in the *Times Literary Supplement* (London), XXIX, 283 (3 April, 1930), from H. Nicolson, *Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart., First Lord Carnock* (London, 1930), which was published while this book was in press.

† P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 442.

‡ Charles-Roux, *Trois ambassades françaises*, pp. 45–46. Sir George Lloyd, another Conservative politician, had been to the embassy on 30 July.

§ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 30 July; Grant Duff to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 313, 315.

tion supplied by the French Government* led the officials of the foreign office to believe that Germany was mobilizing in fact, although no orders had been issued.† This was, of course, only suspicion. And in spite of suspicion, Sir Edward Grey made one more effort for peace. When informed by Prince Lichnowsky that Count Berchtold had instructed Count Szápáry "to give explanations about the Austrian note to Servia, to discuss suggestions and any questions that affect directly Austro-Russian relations,"‡ he at once telegraphed to St. Petersburg and Paris that he "earnestly" hoped that M. Sazonov would encourage those conversations.§ To the Prince himself he said:

> If Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris and go to the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences; but, otherwise . . . if France became involved we should be drawn in.

This was much farther than he had gone at any time yet: he was actually talking as if he would, under certain conditions, abandon the Entente![*] Perhaps this was an additional reason why Sir Edward Grey refused to give M. Cambon the assurances of solidarity so ardently desired.

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* "Yesterday, Friday [*sic*], German patrols have twice crossed our frontier. . . . Thousands of reservists *have been called up* in Germany: this is the last stage before mobilization. Now we have not called up *a single* reservist." The 15th and 16th corps and part of the 8th were said to be concentrated on the frontier, whereas the French troops had been withdrawn 10 kilometres from the frontier. Viviani to P. Cambon, telegram, 31 July; B 338. If the telegram was sent on 31 July, "yesterday" would be Thursday, not Friday. Actually, it was sent on the afternoon of 30 July (Poincaré, IV, 435), which only adds to the mystery. The document, under date of 31 July, was published in the first edition of the British *White Paper* (6 August, 1914) as an enclosure with no. 105, which was a despatch from Grey to Bertie (B 319) of 30 July! The error occurred in the haste of compiling the *White Paper*, the intention having been to publish the first of the French communications (B 319, enclosure; see above, p. 279). When attention was called to the discrepancy in dates, the British Government, instead of publishing the facts, suppressed both the date and the word "Friday" in subsequent editions of the *White Paper*, and requested the French Government to edit its *Livre Jaune*, which was done to the extent of printing the two communications of 30 and 31 July as a single despatch (F 106) under date of 30 July. Cf. editorial note on B 319.

† Nicolson to Grey, 31 July; E 339. Crowe's minute on B 315.

‡ Cf. Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 30 July; G 444.

§ Grey to Buchanan and Bertie, telegrams, 31 July, 11.40 A. M.; B 335.

But in the middle of the afternoon the German embassy informed the foreign office of the Russian general mobilization, and of the German intention to mobilize if Russia did not within twelve hours withdraw her mobilization.[†] The British foreign secretary at once recognized the imminent danger, for he remarked, in the course of his interview with M. Paul Cambon:

> The latest news was that Russia had ordered a complete mobilization of her fleet and army. This, it seemed to me, would precipitate a crisis, and would make it appear that German mobilization was being forced by Russia.[‡]

As the British understood it, German mobilization was different from that of other countries:

> Open mobilization was the last stage. It was not a military preparation; it was in itself an offensive movement. On that order the German armies did not merely concentrate; they marched.[§]

As the German plan of campaign was believed to involve the violation of Belgium as the prelude to the invasion of France, it was to be expected that the question of Belgium would be raised within a very short time.

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[*] Grey to Goschen, telegram, 31 July, 2.45 P. M.; B 340. He indicated what he would consider "reasonable" terms: Since Austria had declared her willingness to respect Serbian sovereignty and the integrity of Serbian territory, "Russia might be informed by the [other] four Powers that they would undertake to prevent Austrian demands going the length of impairing Servian sovereignty and integrity," while "all Powers would of course suspend further military operations or preparations." This was very close to an acceptance of the original Austro-German position. For the fate of the suggestion, see below, p. 318.

[†] Communication by German embassy [of Bethmann-Hollweg's telegram to Lichnowsky, 31 July, G 488], 31 July; B 344. The telegram from Buchanan reporting the mobilization (B 347) was not received until 5.20 P. M., so that Premier Asquith was justified in his statement to Parliament about 5 P. M., "We have just heard—not from St. Petersburg but from Germany—that Russia has proclaimed a general mobilization of her army and fleet."

[‡] Grey to Bertie, 31 July; B 367. This statement is cited by German writers to prove that Grey finally recognized the justice of the German view that Russian mobilization must precipitate war.

[§] *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, p. xiv. Grey, I, 331, American edition, I, 321, expresses the same view. It was correct at least to the extent that the German plans involved the seizure of Luxemburg and Liège immediately; see above, pp. 150, 266.

The question had been discussed in the cabinet that morning, perhaps at earlier meetings. It involved both British interests and British obligations. If it was a British interest to prevent the defeat and humiliation of France by Germany, obviously the German armies must be kept from entering France by the most strategic route; there was also the danger that a victorious Germany would, in some form or other, establish her influence or control in Belgium and thus secure an outlet on the Channel coast. In addition to the defense of British interests, there was also the legal obligation under the Treaty of 1839 to defend Belgian neutrality.* Thus honor and interest coincided, and while it was undoubtedly a great convenience for Sir Edward Grey to be able to urge British intervention on the ground of Belgian neutrality as well as out of the necessity of supporting France, it cannot be made a reproach to him that he exploited the legal advantage which the situation offered him. The precise decision of the cabinet on 31 July is not known, but probably the foreign secretary was only authorized to address an inquiry to the French and German Governments.

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* The question has been much discussed whether the Treaty of 1839 imposed on Great Britain the obligation to do more than respect the neutrality of Belgium, that is, whether she was bound to make another Power respect it. On the only other occasion when the problem arose, in 1870, the British Government concluded with France and Prussia identic treaties, by which it bound itself, in case one Power violated the neutrality of Belgium, to assist the other with all its forces. This view of British obligations obtained in the foreign office in 1914. Of the cabinet discussions about the question, the reports vary. Morley, p. 3, states that "it was thrown back day after day as less urgent than France," but that "the discussion was thin and perfunctory." He goes on to say (p. 14): "The plain truth, as I conceive the truth to be, is this. The German line on Belgian neutrality might be met in two ways. One, we might at once make it a *casus belli;* the other, we might protest with direct energy, as the British Government protested on the Russian repudiation in 1870 of the Black Sea articles of the Treaty of Paris, and push on by diplomatising. What was the difficulty of the second course? Why, our supposed entanglement with France, and nothing else. The precipitate and peremptory blaze about Belgium was due less to indignation at the violation of a treaty, than to natural perception of the plea that it would furnish for intervention on behalf of France, for expeditionary force and all the rest of it. Belgium was to take the place that had been taken before as pleas for war, by Morocco and Agadir." One suspects that to "push on by diplomatising" would not have taken England very far! Lloyd George, relying on the opinion of the French general staff that the German armies would pass through only the southeastern corner of Belgium (which was quite a wrong guess), is said to have argued, at one stage, "You see, it is only a little bit, and the Germans will pay for any damage they do." Beaverbrook, p. 29. He himself (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 26 Oc-

At 5.30 P. M., that is, after the news had been received of the Russian mobilization and of Germany's intention to mobilize if Russia did not countermand her order, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Paris and Berlin:

> I still trust that situation is not irretrievable, but in view of prospect of mobilization in Germany it becomes essential to His Majesty's Government, in view of existing treaties, to ask whether French [German] Government is prepared to engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other Power violates it.
>
> A similar request is being addressed to German [French] Government. It is important to have an early answer.*

The Belgian Government was informed of this *démarche*. In addition, its own duty was pointed out:

> I assume that Belgium will to the utmost of her power maintain neutrality and desire and expect other Powers to observe and uphold it.†

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tober, 1928) has repudiated Morley's account as "a complete distortion of what actually occurred." "With the exception of Mr. Burns, the members of the Liberal Cabinet who were opposed to the war were all in complete agreement that if Germany invaded Belgium the position would be completely changed. At the various consultations we had together, we all agreed that in such an event we should have to take up the position, which Mr. Gladstone assumed in 1870, that Britain was in honour bound by her treaty obligations to defend the integrity of that little country. Lord Morley never dissented from that view. I was just as opposed as he was to intervention in the Russian quarrel with Germany and Austria, but an act of aggression against a country whose independence we were definitely pledged to defend was another matter." Sir Herbert Samuel, another member of the cabinet, also takes issue with Morley (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 26 October, 1928): "It is true that the Belgian aspect did not bulk so largely; but that was because the circumstances were quite clear; no serious difference of opinion was expressed; there was little occasion for argument. With regard to intervention on behalf of France, the case was different. . . . I did not associate myself with those who held that our duty and our interest would require us to enter the war for the assistance of France, because it appeared to me that the case was not clear; and although we might possibly be obliged to decide in that sense it was unnecessary to divide the Cabinet by pressing the point when the other issue, that of Belgium, would settle the matter without destroying its unity."

* Grey to Bertie and Goschen, telegrams, 31 July; B 348.

† Grey to Villiers, telegram, 31 July; B 351.

"An early reply" was requested of Brussels, for if Belgium did not intend to resist a violation of her territory, the military situation might be profoundly affected.*

Apart from its bearing on the British political dissensions, the inquiry about Belgium was a clever move diplomatically. To some extent it compensated the French for the refusal to give them a positive promise of assistance, but more important still, it would force Germany to show her hand. That Germany would agree to respect the neutrality of Belgium was most unlikely, for Bethmann-Hollweg's bid of 29 July had revealed only too clearly the German intention. Still, there was the chance that confronted with the prospect of British intervention on account of Belgium, Germany might, at the last moment, hesitate to attack France, in which case Great Britain would not be drawn into the war. Or, if Germany declined to answer, she had compromised herself politically and given away a military secret. The question was the most disconcerting which could be asked her, yet the British Government was entirely justified in asking it. There was nothing more for Sir Edward Grey to do that day. Henceforth his policy would be determined by the answers to his inquiry, and those answers would depend on the decisions taken in Paris and Berlin with reference to the general situation.

France's Choice, 31 July

While Sir Edward Grey was putting the French ambassador in London off with various excuses, the French Government had every reason to expect serious developments. At 11.25 P. M. on 30 July, word was received that on account of the disquieting information received by the Russian general staff, "the Russian Government has decided to proceed secretly to the first measures of general mobilization."† Reports from Berlin were much to the same effect. The French ambassador had reason for thinking that "all measures of mobilization which can be taken before the publication of the order of general mobilization are being taken,"* and Herr von Jagow had admitted that the heads of the army were insisting on mobilization.† In all probability, Friday, 31 July, would witness decisions in both St. Petersburg and Berlin.

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* There cannot have been much doubt of the answer, for it was known that the six divisions of the Belgian army had been brought up to full peace strength, and that "military preparations are being actively pursued"; which would have been purposeless if Belgium had intended to give a free passage to the German army. Villiers to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 345.

† Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 403. Was this considered a desirable reply to the admonition sent that morning to St. Petersburg

In the opinion of M. Jules Cambon, it was the hesitation of Great Britain which made the situation dangerous:

> Here [Berlin] they entertain hopes of winning the conflict with France and Russia if these stand alone. It is only the eventuality of British intervention which will move the Emperor, his government and interests of all kinds.‡

The President of the Republic thereupon decided, with the approval of the government, to make a personal appeal to King George of England, by means of an autograph letter which was despatched by special courier and was, in fact, presented to the King late the same evening. After affirming that German military preparations, "especially in the immediate neighborhood of the French frontier," were being pushed forward with all speed and that France "has, up to the present, confined herself to the most indispensable precautionary measures," M. Poincaré said:

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against military measures which might give Germany a pretext for partial or general mobilization? So far as published documents show, the French Government did not protest further against Russian general mobilization.

* J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, "secret," 30 July, received 6.20 P. M.; Poincaré, IV, 420. The ambassador added: "Evidently they are trying to make us publish our mobilization first. It is up to us to spoil this game by not yielding to the impatience which will certainly manifest itself in the press and the public at Paris." In a previous telegram, he had said: "It is important for France not to publish her measures of mobilization until Germany has taken a positive decision, so that English public opinion, which may play so great a rôle in the events, may not ascribe to us any initiative in the direction of war." J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; Poincaré, IV, 420.

† J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 30 July, received 31 July, 4 A. M.; F 109. When Cambon reminded Jagow of his statement that Germany would not feel obliged to mobilize in reply to Russian partial mobilization (the general mobilization was not yet known), the minister replied that his words "did not constitute a firm engagement."

‡ J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, "very urgent," 31 July, received 3 A. M., Poincaré, IV, 434.

> From all the information which reaches us it would seem that war would be inevitable if Germany were convinced that the British Government would not intervene in a conflict in which France might be engaged; if, on the other hand, Germany were convinced that the *entente cordiale* would be affirmed in case of need, even to the extent of taking the field side by side, there would be the greatest chance that peace would remain unbroken.

Admitting that the military and naval arrangements and the letters of 1912 left "complete liberty to Your Majesty's Government," he appealed to the circumstances of the moment:

> It is, I consider, on the language and the action of the British Government that henceforward the last chances of a peaceful settlement depend.

France, from the initial stages of the crisis, had enjoined upon her ally an attitude of moderation from which it had not swerved, and would continue to do so; but if hope remained of the abstention of Great Britain, "Austria's demands will remain inflexible, and an agreement between her and Russia will become impossible." In conclusion King George was asked to excuse a step "which is only inspired by the hope of seeing the European balance of power definitely reaffirmed."* If this did not move the British Government, nothing would avail.

The French Government did in fact fulfil M. Poincaré's promise that it would continue to urge moderation on its ally. Informed of Sir Edward Grey's suggestion that Russia should agree to suspend her military preparations if Austria-Hungary would negotiate after occupying Belgrade,† M. Viviani thought this "a useful basis for conversations between the Powers," and instructed his ambassador in St. Petersburg "to press M. Sazonov earnestly to give his adherence without delay to the proposal of Sir E. Grey."‡ As this was sent at 5 P. M.§ and a message received from Berlin at 3.30 announced the Russian general mobilization,* the move was hardly more than a *beau geste*. Still, the German ambassador had a favorable impression of the situation in Paris.

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* R. Poincaré to George V, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 438–449; *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, pp. 542–543.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 342. See above, p. 261.

‡ Viviani to Paléologue, telegram, 31 July; F 112.

§ Poincaré, IV, 461.

> Public opinion a little less excited to-day, thanks to the efforts of the government. Hope for success of pending negotiations revived. Suspicion that we are inciting to war fading away. Mood, in case peace cannot be preserved, that of resignation, but determination.†

Nor did the Russian ambassador, until late in the day, send any telegrams to his government about the complacent and encouraging attitude of France.‡

At 4.25 P. M. a telegram from M. Jules Cambon announced that in consequence of the Russian general mobilization, Germany had proclaimed 'state of danger of war,' and that Baron von Schoen had been instructed to ask what attitude France would adopt.§ Already at 3.30 telephonic communication had been broken by Germany.‖ At the same hour General Joffre addressed a note to the cabinet, in which he stated that the Germans appeared to be moving two more corps to the frontiers and "under the cover of diplomatic conversations were proceeding, in fact, to the complete mobilization of their forces."¶

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* J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, "very urgent," 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 445–446.

† Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 31 July, 12.50 P. M.; G 483.

‡ Schoen called Izvolski energetically to account for spreading the idea that Germany was inciting to war. "He talked very little and assured me that he was endeavoring to keep things calm, since it had become evident that we wished to maintain peace. I hear also from journalistic quarters that he is becoming more cautious." Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 485. According to the British ambassador, however, "Iswolsky goes about declaring that Russia is ready and war inevitable. What a fool, even if it be the truth!" Bertie, I, 7.

§ J. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; F 116.

‖ Poincaré, IV, 444.

¶ The data on which this statement was based have not been published. Telegrams sent about noon by the French diplomatic representatives in Basel, Luxemburg, Munich, and Frankfort reported considerable movements of troops toward the French frontier, but do not speak of mobilization or the calling up of reservists. Poincaré, IV, 442–444. The military authorities may have received other reports, but the official history mentions only such measures as the cutting of the railway between Pagny and Novéant and the detention of French engines at Montreux-Vieux and Amanvillers. *Les armées françaises*, I, 78. According to the evidence

> It is necessary for the government to understand [the general continued] that beginning this evening every twenty-four hours' delay in calling up the reservists and sending the *télégramme de couverture* will involve the moving back of our concentration, that is, the abandonment of part of our territory, at the rate of from 15 to 20 kilometres a day. The commander-in-chief cannot accept this responsibility.

The council of ministers, "left much freer by the publication of 'state of danger of war' " in Germany,* yielded to the general. At 5.40 the commanders of the five corps on the frontier were ordered to send the covering troops to position, with instructions, however, not to violate the 10-kilometre line.† The decision was communicated to the Russian ambassador, who was told that "France would reply to the mobilization of the German army by immediately mobilizing all her forces."‡ On only one point was satisfaction denied the soldiers: the government declined to prevent the exodus of 100,000–150,000 Austro-Hungarian and German subjects who were trying to leave France, of whom a third at least were of military age.§ Incidentally, care was taken to prepare British opinion for further measures. The correspondent of the *Times* was provided with a list of German preparations, which were declared to be greatly in excess of French precautions, and invited to represent French mobilization, which might be ordered at any moment, as a measure forced upon France.|| For the benefit of Sir Edward Grey

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presented in Camena d'Almeida, *L'armée allemande avant et pendant la guerre*, pp. 89–91, reservists were called up, on 31 July, for the 99th, 113th, 169th, and 170th regiments, reservists of the guard regiments in Berlin were ordered to join up on 2 August, and *Landsturm* battalions were formed in various places. Such statements are difficult, if not impossible, to verify.

* Recouly, p. 79.

† *Les armées françaises*, I, 78–79. This step involved mobilization for the five corps, as was admitted to the *Times* correspondent. Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 358. Izvolski was told that these "most complete preparatory measures" would be carried out "without giving them the character of mobilization." Orders were issued, however, for the calling up of "reservists assigned to guard the means of communication"; requisitions were also authorized in the affected areas.

‡ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; Romberg, pp. 39–40.

§ Recouly, pp. 80–81.

|| Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 353. The *Times* on 1 August published a statement nearly identical with that presented to Sir Edward Grey on 31 July (B 338); see above, p. 289.

a precise statement was prepared of the seizure of French engines and the cutting of railway lines,* and the British military attaché was informed that "War Office thinks Germany mobilizes this afternoon."† "Here," noted the British ambassador, "everybody expects England to 'do its duty,'" and he himself hoped that she would.‡

Thus from the point of view of military preparedness, the French Government was in excellent position to receive the German ultimatum, of which the ambassador in Berlin had given warning.§ Baron von Schoen came to the Quai d'Orsay about seven o'clock. At that moment the only news about the Russian mobilization was what M. Jules Cambon had telegraphed, on the testimony of the German Government; neither M. Izvolski nor M. Paléologue had transmitted any information.‖ The German ambassador informed M. Viviani that on account of the Russian general mobilization,

> the German Government had demanded that Russia demobilize; if the Russian Government did not give a satisfactory reply within twelve hours, Germany will mobilize in turn.

He did not say explicitly that Germany would declare war if the Russian answer was not satisfactory (which was stated in his instructions),¶ but this was implied in his question, "What would be the attitude of France in case of war between Germany and Russia?"

The French premier replied that he "had no information about an alleged total mobilization of the Russian army and navy," and said that "he was not willing to give up hope of avoiding the extreme event." But the ambassador, saying that he would come at one o'clock the next day for an answer, requested M. Viviani to present his compliments to the President of the Republic and to provide the passports for his departure.* And he is said to have begun packing up when he returned to his embassy.†

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* Viviani to P. Cambon, telegram, 31 July; B 364, enclosure.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 363.

‡ Bertie, I, 6–7.

§ The government had also refused a recommendation of the financiers for a moratorium "on the ground of confession of weakness to Germany." Herrick to Bryan, telegram, 31 July; US, p. 25.

‖ Izvolski told Bertie that he was "not aware of any general mobilization of Russian forces." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 357. He telegraphed to St. Petersburg that "in the Havas message received here from Berlin there is also mention of the 'general mobilization' of the Russian army, which arouses the suspicion that Germany is trying prematurely to bring about a similar measure on the part of France by one means or another"; which suggests that the ambassador was not informed of the mobilization. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; Romberg, p. 40.

¶ G 491; see above, p. 268.

M. Viviani at once informed the Russian and British ambassadors of the German *démarche.* He also telegraphed to M. Paléologue, saying that he would reply to the German ambassador that "France will be guided by her interests."‡ He added:

> I beg you to communicate this to M. Sazonov immediately and to inform me at once about the reality of the alleged general mobilization in Russia. As I have already advised you, I have no doubt that the Imperial Government, in the highest interests of peace, will on its part avoid everything which may precipitate the crisis.§

The message was certainly the expression of a forlorn hope, but it would seem to show that the French Government did urge its ally to avoid any overt act. Shortly after it was drafted, a telegram was received from St. Petersburg stating that "the mobilization of the Russian army has been ordered."‖ The situation was now clear, and at 9 P. M. the French cabinet met for the third time that day.

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* Viviani, *Réponse au Kaiser*, p. 193. Poincaré, IV, 448–450. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; Romberg, pp. 40–41. Bertie to Grey, telegram and private letter, 31 July; B 357, 374. Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 528.

† Bertie to Grey, 31 July; B 380. Schoen told the American ambassador that "he anticipates immediate reply in the negative." Herrick to Bryan, telegram, 31 July; US, p. 25.

‡ The formula had been agreed upon by Viviani and Poincaré. Poincaré, IV, 453, note 1.

§ Viviani to Paléologue, telegrams, 31 July, 9 and 9.30 P. M. (hour of despatch of the ciphered telegrams); Poincaré, IV, 452–453. The version in F 117 is incomplete.

‖ Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; sent 10.45 A. M., received 8.30 P. M.: Poincaré, IV, 445. The telegram was sent via Bergen, but why it was so long in transmission is not known. The version given in F 118 is very much longer, containing 97 words, and states that the Russian mobilization was ordered "as a result of the general mobilization of Austria and of the measures for mobilization taken secretly, but continuously, by Germany for the last six days." Actually, as we have seen, the Austro-Hungarian general mobilization was in no way responsible for that of Russia. But Sazonov may have offered such an explanation to Paléo-

Its discussions were not free from interruptions. First of all, there was the assassination of the Socialist leader Jean Jaurès in a café. Might not the artisans of Paris, infuriated by the death of their leader, who had always been critical of the alliance with Russia, rise to avenge him?* It was deemed wise to place two regiments of cavalry at the disposal of the prefect of police, but nothing happened.† Indeed, as the troops rode through the Boulevard Montmartre, they were greeted with enthusiastic cheers of *"Vive la France! Vive l'armée!"*‡ The *'union sacrée'* was already beginning, and the next morning the press summoned all Frenchmen to rally to the defense of their country.

At 10.30 M. Viviani had to leave the council long enough to receive from the British ambassador the inquiry from Sir Edward Grey about the neutrality of Belgium—and took the opportunity to ask once more what the attitude of Great Britain would be if Germany mobilized.§ Probably the question was welcomed, for it was an indication—and the first clear one—that Great Britain might intervene. Since the French general staff assumed that the German armies would come through Belgium and the Belgian Government had announced its in-

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logue. That a telegram to that effect, which was probably combined with Paléologue's other message, was received, is suggested by the fact that on the following day Poincaré told the British ambassador that "the Emperor of Russia did not order a general mobilization until after a decree of general mobilization had been issued in Austria." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 403.

* Jaurès is said to have been enraged by the Russian mobilization and to have urged the French Government to put great pressure on its ally to secure the acceptance of Sir Edward Grey's last proposals. According to one story, on 27 July while waiting in the ante-chamber of the foreign office, he saw Izvolski come out of the minister's office, and exclaimed, "There is the maker of the war!"—which the ambassador overheard. From this the theory has been developed that Jaurès was assassinated by Raoul Villain at the instigation of the Russian secret police, lest he incite the French workers to disobey the order of mobilization. M. Cachin, *Humanité*, 1 August, 1914; Jacques Mesnil, in *Vers la vérité*, February, 1924, pp. 120–123; A. Bach, "Jaurès Ermordung," in *KSF*, VII, 880–898 (September, 1929). Jaurès was always critical of the Russian alliance but in spite of being a socialist, he was also a good patriot; whether he would have opposed resisting the German invasion of France must remain a matter of conjecture.

† Poincaré, IV, 474–475.

‡ Recouly, pp. 114–115.

§ Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 380.

tention to mobilize,* the chances must have seemed excellent that military operations would soon be taking place on Belgian soil and that the intervention of Great Britain would not be long delayed. The reply of France to the British inquiry could be made at once. It was in fact communicated to Sir Francis Bertie that same evening:

> French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity, in order to assure defence of her own security, to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times.†

So far as France was concerned, the Belgian question was not a cause for anxiety.

Even more satisfactory was the situation with reference to Italy. "With evident satisfaction" M. Viviani read to the ministers three telegrams from the French ambassador in Rome. The Marquis di San Giuliano, "under the seal of secrecy," had said that Italy considered the attack of Austria-Hungary on Serbia as "an act of aggression which freed Italy from the obligations of the Triple Alliance" and that the Franco-Italian agreement of 1902 was applicable to the situation.‡ This provided that Italy would remain neutral "in case France, in defense of her honor or her security, were to undertake the initiative of a declaration of war."§ In other words, if France, in fulfilling her obligations toward Russia, attacked Germany, Italy would not move.

Thus the French ministers could count on (1) the neutrality of Italy; (2) the resistance of Belgium; (3) the probable intervention of Great Britain on account of Belgium, even if Sir Edward Grey had refused to give any promise on account of France. What were the obligations of France? Article 1 of the military convention of 1893 provided:

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* Poincaré, IV, 472. Davignon to ministers, telegram, 31 July; Belgian, I 10.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 382. Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 474. Viviani to P. Cambon, J. Cambon and Klobukowski, telegrams, 1 August; F 122. Even before the question was formally raised, the French minister in Brussels spontaneously assured the Belgian Government that France would respect the neutrality of Belgium. Klobukowski to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; F 119. Davignon to Beyens, Guillaume and Lalaing, 31 July; Belgian, I 9.

‡ Poincaré, IV, 473. San Giuliano "added, with a finesse worthy of M. Tittoni, that this abstention of Italy was naturally dependent on the wisdom of which France and Russia should give proof," that is to say, they must not be guilty of attacking the Central Powers.

§ *Les accords franco-italiens*, p. 9; Pribram, English translation, II, 250. See above, I, 23.

> If Russia is attacked by Germany or by Austria-Hungary aided by Germany, France will employ all her forces to fight Germany.*

Germany had presented an ultimatum requiring Russia to demobilize within twelve hours, under threat of German mobilization; it was assumed that Germany would declare war in the event of a Russian refusal (although Baron von Schoen had not said so), for the German doctrine that "mobilization meant war" was well understood. This same view had been expressed by the French and Russian military authorities during the negotiation of the military convention.† But was the Russian mobilization synonymous with 'attacking' Germany? During the crisis the Russian Government repeatedly affirmed to Germany that Russian mobilization did not necessarily mean war, and the Tsar assured the German Emperor that so long as negotiations continued with Austria-Hungary, his troops would take no provocative action.‡ What assurances the French Government may have received, in addition to M. Sazonov's statement that he would "continue to negotiate until the last moment,"§ is not known.

But as matters stood on the evening of 31 July, a discussion of the meaning, wisdom or necessity of the Russian mobilization would have been quite academic. France, having decided for reasons of high policy to support Russia on the Serbian question, was constrained to accept the consequences of the action by which the Russian Government sought to secure respect for its views, even if M. Viviani would have preferred that mobilization should not have been ordered. Theoretically, the French premier might have taken the position that since Russia had not respected his wishes, and had given Germany a "pretext for mobilization," the terms of the alliance did not apply. Practically and politically such a course was out of the question. Just as Germany felt constrained to support the Austro-Hungarian action, even when her own advice had been disregarded, so France was in the necessity of aiding her ally on an issue which that ally considered vital. If the Germans believed that the Russian mobilization signified inevitable war, the action of Germany from the beginning of the crisis convinced the French that she was bent on war, and the launching of the German ultimata at a moment when Austria-Hungary and Russia seemed to be on the point of negotiating, coupled with the indications of a secret semi-mobilization of the German army, only confirmed this view. Fortunately for France, the ultimatum to Russia would surely be followed by a declaration of war, so that she could say that Russia had been attacked by Germany and the *casus foederis* thereby established.

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* *L'alliance franco-russe,* p. 94; Pribram, English translation, II, 215.

† See above, p. 250.

‡ See above, pp. 102–104, 267.

§ Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 30 July; F 102.

About midnight of 31 July the French Government took its decision. The exact terms have not been made known, but the Russian military attaché in Paris sent this announcement to St. Petersburg:

> The French minister of war intimated to me in high and hearty tones that the government is firmly decided on war, and requested me to repeat the request of the French general staff that all our efforts should be directed against Germany and that Austria should be treated as a *quantité negligéable.**

The decision was analogous to that communicated some hours previously by the German Emperor to the Emperor Francis Joseph that he was ready to begin war against Russia and France and that Austria-Hungary should ignore Serbia and use all her forces against Russia.† Just as the German decision was announced before Russia had attacked either Austria or Germany, so the French was made known before Germany had attacked Russia. In similar fashion, just as General von Moltke was determined to bring about German mobilization on 1 August,* so at 1 A. M. of that day the corps commanders of the French army were informed that "the order for mobilization will probably be issued to-day, 1 August, in the afternoon" and were instructed to take all steps necessary to facilitate its execution.†

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* Izvolski to Sazonov, 31 July, sent 1 August, 1 A. M.; Romberg, p. 41.

† See above, p. 270.

While the French cabinet was sitting, two *démarches,* quite unknown to it, had been made at the Quai d'Orsay. It was pointed out in an earlier chapter how reluctant Count Berchtold was to assure the Russian Government that Austria-Hungary would respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Serbia, and that he refused to state this "in binding form."‡ When he learned that such assurances had been given in Paris by the German ambassador,§ he was much annoyed, and telegraphed to his ambassador, Count Szécsen, that this "must rest on a misunderstanding" and was "at the moment inopportune."|| But as the matter got into the French papers, the ambassador found himself in an uncomfortable position, and he informed his chief that "a departure from this position would create the worst impression imaginable here and in England";¶ he also reported the widely current view that Austria intended to seize the Sandjak of Novi Bazar.

> I am being repeatedly pressed [he said] in government circles and by other politicians for some kind of reassuring declaration which they can use against the alarmist news from Russia.**

To this hint Count Berchtold replied late on 31 July, after the refusal of the Anglo-German suggestion of the *'Halt in Bel-*

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* See above, pp. 265–266, 270.

† *Les armées françaises*, I, 80.

‡ See above, pp. 2–3.

§ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; A II 55.

|| Berchtold to Szécsen, telegram, 27 July; A II 75, 3.

¶ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 39.

** Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; A III 41.

grad' had been decided upon, by authorizing Count Szécsen to inform the French Government of the assurances given to Russia and to declare that Austria-Hungary did not intend to reoccupy the Sandjak.*

On receipt of this telegram the ambassador went to the Quai d'Orsay about 11.15 P. M. As M. Viviani was engaged at the meeting of the cabinet to consider the German ultimatum, he was received by M. Berthelot, the assistant political director. The ambassador communicated Count Berchtold's assurances, and added, as his personal opinion that

> it might still be possible to settle the matter, since mobilization did not mean war and there were still several days left in which to negotiate. It was Serbia's business to ask Austria for terms.

M. Berthelot replied, privately, that "it seemed to be too late, for we had been overtaken by events,"† by which he meant, as Count Szécsen well understood, that "in view of the German *démarche,* the Serbian question had been pushed completely into the background."‡ In view of the Russian mobilization, the Austro-Hungarian general mobilization§ and the German 'state of danger of war,' the situation may well have appeared hopeless to M. Berthelot; at any rate, he did not inform the council of ministers of Count Szécsen's overture.

Shortly after the adjournment of the council, the political director of the foreign office, M. de Margerie, received a personal note from Count Szécsen stating that his government had been compelled to take measures "of a *purely defensive* character" in Galicia, but desired to continue conversations with Russia "in a friendly manner."* This seemed to be confirmed by a telegram from M. Sazonov recounting an interview with Count Szápáry on 31 July,† which M. Izvolski communicated to the Quai d'Orsay very early on 1 August. The French Government had decided for war, but here was too good a situation not to exploit. A telegram was accordingly sent to St. Petersburg, Vienna and Rome stating (1) that Count Szécsen had transmitted the assurances of his government concerning the integrity and sovereignty of Serbia, and (2) that Count Szápáry had made overtures to M. Sazonov for conversations which held out the possibility of an Austro-Russian agreement. The conclusion was obvious:

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* Berchtold to Szécsen, telegram, 31 July, 7 P. M.; A III 62. According to Izvolski, Poincaré told him the next day that "during the last few days the Austrian ambassador had emphatically assured him and Viviani that Austria had declared to us that she was ready to respect both the territorial integrity and the sovereign rights of Serbia, but that we had intentionally concealed these assurances," which the ambassador said was "an absolute lie." Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Romberg, pp. 45–46. This is not consistent with Szécsen's testimony, according to which he had not been able to give the French Government any assurances.

† Memorandum of Berthelot, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 465.

‡ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 64.

§ Known from telegrams of Dumaine, received at 7.30 and 8.30 P. M.; Poincaré, IV, 459.

> It seems therefore that since Russia accepts the British proposal (which implies the stopping of military preparations by all concerned) even at this late hour peace may be preserved . . . if the desire of Berlin for peace is sincere.‡

It is significant that nothing was said about Count Szécsen's intimation that Austria-Hungary might negotiate with Serbia through a third Power and that Belgrade was not informed of the matter. The purpose of the telegram was simply to represent Berlin as the principal obstacle to peace.

Before his own visit to the Quai d'Orsay, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador had confided to his Rumanian colleague, M. Lahovary, that

> if Serbia were to address herself to Austria, either directly or through friendly Powers, perhaps the Vienna Government would be willing to indicate the "additional demands" which it intended to make.

The Rumanian minister, after consulting his friend the Swiss minister, M. Lardy, informed the Serbian minister, M. Vesnich, of what Count Szécsen had said. M. Vesnich was willing to meet Count Szécsen. The Rumanian and Serbian diplomatists thereupon went to inform the foreign office of this new development. M. de Margerie promised to telegraph at once to Vienna for further information—though whether he did so is not known.

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* Poincaré, IV, 467–468. Szécsen's letter is a paraphrase of Berchtold's telegram of 31 July (A III 78) to his ambassadors informing them of the decisions of the ministerial council. The telegram is stated to have been sent off at 7 A. M., on 1 August; this must be incorrect, so far as concerns the copy to Szécsen.

† See below, p. 312.

‡ Berthelot to Paléologue, Dumaine and Barrère, 1 August, 6 A. M.; Poincaré, IV, 465–466.

The next day the Rumanian minister, in company with his Swiss colleague, who had received telephonic authorization from Berne to "associate himself with any *démarche* which might yet secure the maintenance of peace," was informed that "it was too late." The attitude of Germany toward Russia (as represented by the ultimatum) made any further discussion impossible.*

What authority the Austro-Hungarian ambassador had for his opinion that his government might be willing to negotiate with Serbia through a third Power is not known, for there is no hint of this in any of the published Austrian documents; moreover the ministerial council at Vienna on 31 July had strongly opposed any idea of negotiation.† The French Government, though not informed of these circumstances, was therefore justified in regarding—if it did so regard—Count Szécsen's overture as a play for time. But its own attitude was hardly consistent. It was arguing both that the prospect of diplomatic negotiations for a peaceful settlement would be good were it not for the German ultimatum and that it was too late to begin such negotiations! A cleverer course would have been to follow up Count Szécsen's hint and force the Cabinet of Vienna into the open. If this was not done, the reason must have been that the midnight decision did not allow for further negotiations.

At midnight on Friday, 31 July, the European situation may be summarized as follows: Austria-Hungary, rejecting the proposal for a *'Halt in Belgrad,'* had decided to continue her operations against Serbia and to negotiate only if Russia suspended her military preparations; she had also ordered general mobilization. Russia had ordered general mobilization. Germany had decided for war, had notified her ally of this decision, had proclaimed 'threatening danger of war,' and had despatched ultimata to Russia and France. France, on receipt of the German ultimatum, had decided for war, and was prepared to order mobilization on the following day. Great Britain, although unwilling to promise assistance to France, had raised the question of Belgian neutrality, which, unless all signs failed, would be violated by Germany; the British fleet had been sent to its war station. Belgium, in order to defend her neutrality, had ordered mobilization. Italy had decided to remain neutral. If the peace of Europe was to be kept, it could only be by a Russian acceptance of the German ultimatum, which was presented in St. Petersburg at midnight of 31 July.

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* Victor Basch, in *Ère nouvelle*, 27 December, 1920; M. Lahovary, in *Matin*, 4 January, 1921; Morhardt, *Les preuves*, pp. 235–238; Poincaré, IV, 464–469. Poincaré states that he did not hear of this incident until 1920.

† See above, pp. 217–218.

CHAPTER XIX

GERMANY AND RUSSIA

Russia's Last Moves, 31 July

After general mobilization had been ordered, there was little that the Russian Government could do but await the consequences. As soon as he heard of the red posters Count Pourtalès hastened to the foreign office. He was told that the mobilization was only "a precautionary measure dictated by the lack of conciliatory spirit evident in Vienna and Berlin":

> Russia for her part would do nothing irretrievable, and peace would still be maintained if Germany would consent before it was too late to exercise a moderating influence on her ally.*

The ambassador thereupon handed in a statement of the German point of view. Once more he argued that Russia should be content with the Austrian promises not to "disturb the territorial integrity of Serbia or interfere with the legitimate interests of Russia."

> Russia [he argued] should take into account that in trying to force Austria to go beyond this declaration, she is asking her to do something which is not compatible with her dignity as a Great Power. While reproaching Austria with infringing on the sovereign rights of Serbia, she wishes herself to infringe on that same right of Austria.

It was, he said, a German interest to maintain the prestige of Austria-Hungary; "if Russia insists on her demands and refuses to recognize the compelling necessity of localizing the Austro-Serbian conflict in the interest of European peace, she must at the same time recognize the extreme gravity of the situation."*

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* Schilling, p. 69.

What the ambassador hoped to accomplish by this declaration, which marked a return to the attitude of 24 July, is not evident. He then telephoned to M. Sazonov, who was at Peterhof with the Tsar. Getting only "an evasive reply" [*einigen nichtssagenden Bemerkungen*], he decided to see the Tsar personally, "in order to open his eyes to the seriousness of the situation."†

The audience took place in the latter part of the afternoon. The Tsar was friendly. He said that "for technical reasons" it was impossible to revoke the mobilization and showed the ambassador the telegram which he had sent the German Emperor promising that his troops would not take any "provocative action";‡ but he declared that

> it was absolutely necessary for the repose of Europe that we should exercise more influence and, in certain cases, pressure on Austria.

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 527. Schilling, p. 70.

† Pourtalès, p. 66.

‡ G 487; see above, p. 267. The Tsar said that he had begun to write a letter to the Emperor. Probably this is the letter given in *Correspondance entre Guillaume II et Nicolas II, 1894–1914* (Paris, 1924), pp. 283–284. The French text is stated to have been translated from the Russian, as published by the Soviet Government; as the two monarchs always corresponded in English, the translation which follows is only an approximation to the (supposedly) English original. "I am sending Tatishchev to you [see above, p. 111] with this letter. He will be in a position to give you more detailed explanations than I can do here. The opinion of Russia is as follows: The assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife is a horrible crime perpetrated by individual Serbs. But what is there to prove that the Serbian Government was privy to the murder? Alas! we know from numerous facts that it is often impossible to rely entirely on the results of an inquiry or on the conclusion of judicial authorities—especially if political motives are involved in the matter (that of Friedjung and Prohaska two or three years ago). Instead of submitting the matter to the judgment of Europe and of *giving time* to other countries to take cognizance of the results of the whole inquiry, Austria has addressed an ultimatum to Serbia, allowing a delay of forty-eight hours, then has declared war. All Russia and an important part of the opinion of other countries consider the reply of Serbia as satisfactory: it is impossible to demand that an independent state should go further in concessions made at the demand of another nation. Repressive expeditions ought to be undertaken only in one's own country or in colonies. That is why this war has provoked such indignation in my country. It will be very difficult to calm the warlike manifestations which are taking place. The more Austria perseveres in her aggressive conduct, the more grave will the situation become. I address myself to you as her ally to mediate with the object of maintaining peace." Actually Tatishchev never left for Berlin.

Count Pourtalès got the impression that "the Tsar is not yet conscious of the gravity of the situation." But when the ambassador declared that war could be avoided only by the recall of the mobilization, Nicholas pointed heavenward and said, "Then only One can help us." Before leaving the palace, Count Pourtalès spoke earnestly to Count Fredericks, the minister of the household, who could merely say that the Tsar had been persuaded to order the mobilization by the ministers of war and the interior.*

During the day M. Sazonov continued ostensibly to work for peace. From Berlin he had learned that although Herr von Jagow had declared his formula of the day before "unacceptable," Count Szápáry had been instructed to "continue conversations" and that "new proposals from Grey had probably already arrived in St. Petersburg."† This was indeed the case, for the British foreign secretary had combined the original Russian formula with his own suggestion of an Austrian occupation of Belgrade, and was asking Russia to suspend her military preparations if Austria-Hungary would consent to the Powers finding a solution which would not impair Serbia's sovereign rights and independence.‡

M. Sazonov, having ordered the general mobilization, was not in a position to accept the British proposal as it stood. He therefore drafted still another formula:

> If Austria agrees to check the advance of her troops on Serbian territory; if recognizing that the conflict between Austria and Serbia has assumed the character of a question of European interest, she will allow the Great Powers to examine the matter and determine how Serbia can satisfy the Austro-Hungarian Government without impairing her rights as a sovereign state or her independence, Russia will undertake to maintain her waiting attitude.§

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram for the Emperor, 31 July; G 535. Pourtalès, pp. 67–71. Fredericks' explanation of the Tsar's consent is not confirmed from the other sources, which agree that Sazonov was responsible. See above, pp. 242–244.

† Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, "urgent," 30 July; R, 1925 111.

‡ B 309; see above, p. 261.

§ Sazonov to ambassadors, telegram, 31 July; R 67. According to Romberg, p. 38, note 54, it was sent at 10.10 P. M. Paléologue's telegram (F 113) giving the

In communicating this to the British and French ambassadors, he told them of the Tsar's promise to the German Emperor "not to move a man across the frontier so long as conversation with Austria continued."* But his attitude was stiffer than on the previous day when he had declared his readiness to suspend the military preparations, for Austria-Hungary would now have to negotiate under pressure and before occupying Belgrade.

Did M. Sazonov believe that the Cabinet of Vienna was at last ready to negotiate? Late in the day he telegraphed to the Russian ambassadors abroad:

> The Austrian ambassador visited me to-day and informed me that his government is prepared to enter into an exchange of views regarding the contents of the ultimatum handed to Serbia. I expressed my satisfaction and remarked to the ambassador that it would be preferable to conduct the negotiations in London, with all the Great Powers participating. We hope that the British Government will assume the direction of these discussions, for which all Europe will be grateful to it.† In order that the negotiations may take a favorable course, it is very important that Austria should suspend her military operations on Serbian territory.‡

This telegram necessarily created the impression that the Austro-Hungarian Government had, at the last minute, yielded the whole point at issue between it and Russia, an impression confirmed by the intimation conveyed by Count Berchtold to Sir Edward Grey that he was ready to consider British mediation between Austria and Serbia.§ Yet just as the Aus-

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text of the formula was sent at 7.30 P. M., Buchanan's (B 393) at 12.15 A. M., on 1 August.

* Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 393. Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 462.

† He said the same thing to Buchanan. Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 393.

‡ Sazonov to ambassadors, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 135. Omitted in the Russian *Orange Book* of 1914, but published in British *Blue Book*, no. 133.

§ Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 1 August; B 422. Cf. Berchtold's circular telegram, 31 July; A III 65.

tro-Hungarian minister was 'spoofing' his British colleague,* so the Russian minister appears to have misrepresented the communication made to him by Count Szápáry.

The communication was occasioned by the receipt of Count Berchtold's instructions of the day before which authorized a discussion of Austro-Russian relations (but not of Austro-Serbian) in general terms.† The ambassador decided, in spite of the Russian mobilization, to act on the instructions because

> on the one hand I did not want to disavow the assertion of the Emperor William that we were willing to continue the conversation, and on the other hand it seemed to me opportune, for the establishing of our tactical situation, to appear as the ones attacked and yet to have given a final proof of good will, and thus put Russia as much as possible in the wrong.‡

Count Szápáry declared that there had been a "mistake" on the part of the Russian minister in thinking that his government declined conversations, for Count Berchtold was "not only ready to negotiate with Russia on a broad basis, but disposed in particular to discuss the text of the note as far as its interpretation was concerned," unless, indeed, the Austro-Hungarian minister considered himself relieved of his concession by the Russian mobilization. The ambassador endeavored to point out that there was a "discrepancy" between the Russian and Austrian views, for whereas the former was that "the form of the note should be modified," the latter was that "its meaning could be explained"; and he succeeded in avoiding any discussion of the text of the note.

How, then, could the Russian minister assert that the Austro-Hungarian Government was "ready to enter into an exchange of views regarding the contents of the ultimatum"?§

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* See above, pp. 217–219.

† Berchtold to Szápáry, telegrams, 30 July; A III 44, 45. See above, p. 178.

‡ Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 75.

§ He should have been disabused by the news from Vienna. Berchtold and his advisers all insisted that "Austria is bound to carry through the action which she has begun and to give Serbia a serious lesson which will provide a sure guarantee

No doubt he was excited. "M. Sazonov was greatly relieved by my overtures and appeared to attach an exaggerated importance to them," Count Szápáry reported; he even proposed that the negotiations be conducted on "the neutral ground of London."* Perhaps he was grasping at a straw. But it is more likely that he wished to gain time by negotiations while the mobilization was being executed, according to the arrangement of November, 1912,† and that he was manœuvering for position, just as were Count Berchtold and Herr von Bethmann. This is borne out by what the Serbian premier Pashich wrote to his chief of staff on 31 July:

> The reports from our minister in St. Petersburg declare that Russia is now talking and drawing out the negotiations in order to gain time for the mobilization and concentration of her army. When that is complete she will declare war on Austria.‡

There are indeed numerous indications that by this time the Russian Government considered war certain. Quite early on 31 July the military and naval attachés in Paris and London were instructed to send their reports through their respective embassies in a special cipher.§ Russian subjects in France who could not get back home were allowed to serve in the French army.‖ Permission was requested of the French Government for three French artillery officers attached to the Russian navy to remain with it.¶ Finally the ministry of

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for the future." Schebeko to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; R 66. The next morning Sazonov told Buchanan and Paléologue that Szápáry "had no precise instructions"! "He tried to turn conversation away from Servian question to that of general relations between Russia and Austria. . . . It was useless to talk about Austrian and Russian relations in the abstract while this issue of the question remained unsettled." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 1 August, received 2 August, 8.40 A. M.; B 459. This leaves no doubt that Sazonov deliberately misrepresented the conversation in his telegram.

* Szápáry to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 97.

† See above, pp. 251–252.

‡ Pashich to Putnik, 31 July; *KSF*, IV, 836 (November, 1926).

§ Neratov to Izvolski and Benckendorff, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 124.

‖ Neratov to Izvolski, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 126.

¶ Arzimovich to Izvolski, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 137.

finance asked that the French banks should not press their Russian creditors for immediate payment but give time for the sale of securities.[*] Such requests indicate not only the determination of the Russian Government but its confidence in France.

Even more instructive was the action taken with reference to the Balkan states. Serbia was promised a credit of 20,000,000 francs for the next three months.[†] In addition she was advised to sound Bulgaria on the question of military co-operation and to offer a territorial compensation "in case Serbia should receive such a compensation elsewhere"[‡]—which throws a queer light on the Russian demand that the territorial integrity of Serbia must be respected! The Russian minister in Bucharest was instructed to find out if Rumania would go over "to our side" in return for the promise of Transylvania.[§] Finally assurances were offered to Turkey that Russian military preparations in the Caucasus need not cause any uneasiness and that "it depended on her whether our relations remained of the very best."[‖] Thus Russia's conduct was on all fours with that of Germany: each was persuaded that war was inevitable and was anxiously seeking support in the Near East.

During the day the Russian ambassador in Berlin reported that Germany would answer the Russian mobilization with her own;[¶] his colleague in Paris stated, on the authority of the French ambassador in Berlin, that Germany would also require Russia to demobilize.[**] The Russian foreign minister therefore cannot have been greatly surprised when Count Pourtalès appeared at midnight bringing an ultimatum.

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[*] Sazonov to Izvolski, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 136.

[†] Sazonov to Strandtmann, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 133.

[‡] Sazonov to Strandtmann, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 125.

[§] Sazonov to Poklevski-Koziell, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 128.

[‖] Sazonov to Giers, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 127.

[¶] Sverbeyev to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 141.

[**] Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; Romberg, p. 39. He added that France would take "the most complete preparatory measures" for the five corps stationed on the frontier, and would reply to German mobilization by mobilizing her own forces.

Quite possibly it was because M. Sazonov expected such a *dénouement* that he sent out his telegram stating that Austria-Hungary had agreed to discuss the contents of the note to Serbia.

The conversation between the minister and the ambassador lasted for an hour. Each used his stock arguments. The minister asserted that Germany "overestimated the significance of a Russian mobilization" and referred to the Tsar's promise to Emperor William. The ambassador complained of Russia's disloyalty in mobilizing against Germany while mediation was still proceeding and asserted that "the Emperor of Russia needed to speak only one word" to stop the whole business. When Count Pourtalès asked for a guarantee that "Russia intended to keep the peace, even if an agreement was not reached with Austria," M. Sazonov "was unable to give an affirmative answer," an evasion which, if perhaps natural, is highly significant.* M. Sazonov's version is that when he asked if the ultimatum meant war, "the ambassador replied in the negative, but that we were very near it."† Substantially, though not formally, the Russian Government had refused the German demand. From this moment, in all human probability, war was only a question of time. Only some drastic and unexpected move by France or Great Britain could save the situation.

Germany's Declaration of War on Russia, 1 August

The German ultimata to Russia and France left little doubt anywhere that the great war so often predicted and so often postponed had come at last. But about the time they were being despatched, important news was received from Prince Lichnowsky concerning a conversation with Sir Edward Grey. Informed by the ambassador that Count Berchtold had instructed Count Szápáry "to give explanations about the Austrian note to Serbia, to discuss suggestions and any questions that affect directly Austro-Russian relations,"* the British minister had promised "to use his influence" at St. Petersburg for the opening of those conversations.† Indeed, he seemed to show a certain sympathy for the Austro-German point of view:

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* Pourtalès to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; G 536. Pourtalès, pp. 73–76.

† Sazonov to representatives abroad, telegram, 1 August; R 70.

> With reference to the Austro-Russian conversations he thought that everything depended on Austria's conceding enough to put Russia in the wrong if she should still refuse, for then he would be in a position to exert pressure in Paris and St. Petersburg. He also indicated to me that in the circumstances it was just this question of reasonableness which might be determining for the attitude of England, since she was not bound by any absolute agreements . . . he must be in a position to justify a hesitant attitude on the part of England by some evident lack of right on the side of Russia.‡

Prince Lichnowsky was greatly encouraged:

> To-day for the first time I have the impression that the recently improved relations with Germany and perhaps also some friendly feeling for Germany in the cabinet makes it appear possible that in the event of war England may adopt a waiting attitude.§

He therefore insisted on the necessity of real concessions being made by Vienna and of most energetic pressure by Berlin to secure them.

What Sir Edward Grey would consider a "reasonable proposal" was made clear that evening by the British ambassador in Berlin. His idea was thus expressed:

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* Cf. Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 30 July; G 444.

† He acted promptly to this end. Grey to Buchanan and Bertie, telegrams, 31 July, 11.40 A. M.; B 335. See above, p. 289.

‡ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 31 July, received 3.25 P. M. (five minutes before the despatch of the ultimata); G 489. Grey's version (B 340), which was somewhat clearer, was communicated to the Wilhelmstrasse later in the day by Goschen (G 496). "If Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris, and go the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences; but, otherwise, . . . if France became involved we should be drawn in."

§ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 484.

> Germany might sound Vienna, and I would undertake to sound St. Petersburg, whether it would be possible for the four disinterested Powers to offer to Austria that they would undertake to see that she obtained full satisfaction of her demands on Servia, provided they did not impair Servian sovereignty and the integrity of Servian territory. . . . Austria has already declared her willingness to respect them. Russia might be informed by the four Powers that they would undertake to prevent Austrian demands going the length of impairing Servian sovereignty and integrity. All Powers would of course suspend further military operations or preparations.*

The proposal was not a very practicable one, for Russia had declared that she would not be satisfied with the Austrian assurances,† and Austria-Hungary had given no indication that she would agree to less than the full programme of her ultimatum. But it did permit an exchange of views between the Powers—and marked a distinct approach to the original German position.

Sir Edward Goschen spent an hour with Herr von Jagow "urging him most earnestly" to accept the proposal and to make another effort to prevent war.

> [The Secretary of State] expressed himself very sympathetically toward your proposal, and appreciated your continued efforts to maintain peace, but said it was impossible for the Imperial Government to consider any proposal until they had received an answer from Russia to their communication of to-day; . . . if the answer from Russia was satisfactory he thought personally that your proposal merited favourable consideration, and in any case he would lay it before the Emperor and Chancellor, but he repeated that it was no use discussing it until the Russian Government had sent in their answer to the German demand. . . . Russia's mobilization had spoilt everything.‡

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 31 July; B 340. Communicated to Jagow by Goschen; G 496.

† Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 247. Nicolson's minute on B 264.

‡ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 385.

The German Government had, in fact, made up its mind for war,* and treated the British suggestions exactly as the French Government did those from Vienna. Sir Edward Goschen then put the question about the neutrality of Belgium. Herr von Jagow replied that he would have to consult the Emperor and the chancellor, but "he rather doubted whether they could answer at all":

> Any reply they might give could not fail, in the event of war, to have the undesirable effect of disclosing to a certain extent part of their plan of campaign.

[And he might have said, as he no doubt realized, that failure to reply would be equally revealing!] He then said that "Belgium had already committed certain acts which he could only qualify as hostile," such as putting an embargo on a consignment of grain destined for Germany.† The ambassador understood well enough:

> I don't think for a moment that they will answer about Belgium, but it is a rather significant fact that they are trying . . . to get up a case against Belgium.‡

The several observations of Herr von Jagow made clear that fear of what Great Britain might do would not deflect the German Government from its course.

Of no more effect was the intelligence, communicated officially by the Marquis di San Giuliano after a session of the council of ministers, that "Austria's procedure against Serbia must be regarded as an act of aggression" and that "therefore Italy would have to remain neutral."§ On the contrary, stimulated by the opinion of the ambassador in Rome that Italy could still be bought by compensations, Herr von Jagow informed Rome of the agreement reached between Count Berchtold and the Duke of Avarna about Article VII, "since I understand that the attitude of the government there will be changed by it."*

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* See above, pp. 270–272.
† Goschen to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 383.
‡ Goschen to Nicolson, private, [1 August]; B 510.
§ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 31 July, received 1 August, 3.55 A. M.; G 534.

The ultimatum to Russia was due to expire at noon on Saturday, 1 August, that to France at 1 P. M. During the morning, therefore, the German Government had to determine its future course. Its position was most difficult. Although the Russian mobilization had decided it to go to war (barring the altogether unlikely stoppage of the mobilization), its strategy, as has been explained, did not contemplate an attack on Russia; on the other hand, political considerations would probably cause the Russian Government to refrain from starting hostilities against Germany. But, according to the plans of the general staff, Germany could not allow the situation to develop normally: she must invade France at once, in order to be able to deal with Russia later. How then was the war to be started, since Germany had no quarrel with France? General von Moltke, with soldierly directness, thought a declaration of war unnecessary and proposed to begin his military operations at once,† that is, to commence the invasion of Belgium, expecting that "France will move into Belgium in the rôle of the protector of Belgian neutrality just as soon as Germany's move against Belgium becomes known in Paris."‡ So far as Russia was concerned, he apparently intended to do nothing.§ But he did not object to a declaration of war. In the opinion of the chancellor and the foreign office, a declaration of war was necessary in order to justify the German action against Belgium.|| Admiral von

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* Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 1 August; G 541.

† Tirpitz, II, 11; Kuhl, *Der deutsche Generalstab in Vorbereitung und Durchführung des Weltkrieges*, p. 127.

‡ Moltke to foreign office, 2 August; G 662.

§ After the war Bethmann-Hollweg stated that the general staff intended to cross the Russian frontier at once with the object of threatening the Russians while they were mobilizing. Bethmann, I, 156. This does not appear to have been the case.

|| To begin military operations without "a reasoned declaration of war or an ultimatum with a conditional declaration of war," was contrary to article I of The Hague Convention of 1907 relative to the opening of hostilities, to which Germany was a party. The German ultimatum to Russia did not contain a conditional declaration of war, but merely stated that Germany would mobilize if Russia did not stop her mobilization within twelve hours. See above, p. 268.

Tirpitz and General von Falkenhayn were opposed to a declaration of war on Russia for political reasons, because it would place Germany in the position of aggressor; the former would have justified the demand on Belgium by the fact that "Belgium had concluded military agreements with France and England."*

As a matter of fact, each of the several courses proposed was open to the same objection, namely, that Germany would be forced to begin operations or to declare war at a moment when diplomatic negotiations were still proceeding and in face of the Tsar's promise that his troops would not attack so long as the negotiations continued.† If the German staff insisted for reasons of military advantage on the principle that mobilization meant war, the German Government could not escape from the political handicap of taking the overt step which actually began the war.

The policy of the chancellor triumphed. He secured the approval of the Emperor to the declarations of war against Russia and France which had been drawn up on 31 July,‡ after the despatch of the ultimata, and then he summoned the Bundesrat. He justified the German position by exposing "the secret military preparations" of Russia and her subsequent mobilization while Germany was engaged in mediation.

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* Tirpitz, II, 13. Tirpitz, *Erinnerungen*, pp. 240–241.

† That evening Goschen "spent a long time arguing with [Jagow] that the chief dispute was between Austria and Russia, and that Germany was only drawn in as Austria's ally. If therefore Austria and Russia were, as was evident, ready to discuss matters and Germany did not desire war on her own account, it seemed to me only logical that Germany should hold her hand and continue to work for a peaceful settlement." The German foreign minister replied that Russian mobilization forced Germany to mobilize also. "Russia had said that her mobilization did not necessarily imply war, and that she could perfectly well remain mobilized for months without making war. This was not the case with Germany. She had the speed and Russia had the numbers, and the safety of the German Empire forbade that Germany should allow Russia time to bring up masses of troops from all parts of her wide dominions." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 458.

‡ Memorandum of Bethmann-Hollweg, [1 August]; G 540A. According to Tirpitz, II, 14, Bethmann told Albert Ballin that "he needed his declaration of war for reasons of internal politics." What he meant by this is not clear. Perhaps he thought that by making Russia responsible for the war, instead of declaring war on Belgium or France, he would more easily secure the support of the Social Democrats, who would be willing to fight against Russian autocracy, whereas they might object to a war begun against one of the western nations. Cf. P. Scheidemann, *Memoiren eines Sozialdemokraten* (Dresden, 1928), I, chap. xi.

> A general mobilization [he said] we can only regard as a hostile act directed against us. It places us in a position from which we can escape only by action, unless we are willing to sacrifice our honor and our security. It is nothing less than a challenge, when mobilization is directed against us while we are engaged in mediation. Russia is attempting to represent matters in the light that mobilization is not to be considered a hostile act against us. Should we commit ourselves to this view, we should be sinning against the safety of our fatherland.

Unless, therefore, Russia promised to stop her mobilization and France made "a plain and unconditional declaration of neutrality," the Emperor would declare that he was forced to consider himself in a state of war with Russia and would state to France that "since France will not guarantee her neutrality, he must assume that we are at war with France also." After Herr von Bethmann had repeated that "the provocation which we have received from Russia is impossible for us to bear, if we are not to abdicate as one of the Great Powers of Europe," his proposals were unanimously approved by the representatives of the federated governments.*

No reply to the ultimatum having been received from St. Petersburg at noon on 1 August, the declaration of war was despatched at 12.52 P. M., to be presented at 6 P. M., Russian time, if at that hour Count Pourtalès had not received a satisfactory reply. It recited that Russia had ordered general mobilization "without awaiting the results" of German mediation and that this measure, "not justified by any military preparations on the part of Germany," placed the German Empire "in grave and imminent danger"; wherefore the German Government had required Russia to suspend her military measures. The declaration then continued:

> Russia having refused to accede/ having believed it unnecessary to reply/ to this demand, and having made manifest by this refusal/ attitude/ that her action was directed against Ger-

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* Protocol of the Bundesrat, 1 August; G 553.

> many, I [Count Pourtalès would be speaking] have the honor, in behalf of my government to inform your Excellency [M. Sazonov] as follows:
>
> His Majesty the Emperor, my august sovereign, accepts the challenge in the name of the Empire and considers himself as being in a state of war with Russia.

Count Pourtalès was instructed to ask for his passports and turn over the protection of German interests to the American embassy.*

For all practical purposes this document ends the story of the long negotiations that had begun more than a week before. Several striking incidents, however, occurred before the day was over. General von Falkenhayn made a last effort to prevent the political blunder of a declaration of war. To quote from his diary:

> Persuade Moltke to go with me to Jagow to prevent the foolish premature declaration of war on Russia. The answer is: Too late. Since up to four o'clock this afternoon no answer has come from Russia, although the ultimatum expired at noon, I went to the chancellor to induce him to go with me to the Emperor and request the issuance of the order for mobilization. After a longish resistance he agreed, and we telephoned to Moltke and Tirpitz. Meanwhile his Majesty himself rang up and requested us to come to him with the order for mobilization.†

At 5 P. M. William II ordered the mobilization of the German army, signing the document on a table made of the wood of the *Victory,* Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar. Those present were the chancellor, Falkenhayn, Tirpitz, Moltke, Lyncker and Plessen. As he laid down the pen, the Emperor is said to have exclaimed, "Gentlemen, you will live to regret this."* But notwithstanding the fact that Germany and Austria-Hungary would be facing the whole world, "the feeling in military circles here," so the Bavarian minister declared, "is one of absolute confidence."†

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Pourtalès, telegram, "urgent," 1 August; G 542. The alternative drafts were provided because it was not known whether the Russian Government would make an unsatisfactory reply or make no reply at all.

† Zwehl, p. 58. According to a statement by A. von Wegerer in *KSF*, V, 784–785 (August, 1927), the visit to Jagow occurred in the early morning hours of 2 August, and the answer "Too late" is to be explained by the fact that the declaration of war was supposed to have been presented some hours before, although no report had then been received from St. Petersburg.

Before the mobilization was ordered, the Emperor received a last telegram from the Tsar:

> Understand you are obliged to mobilize but wish to have the same guarantee from you as I gave you, that these measures *do not* mean war and that we shall continue negotiating for the benefit of our countries and universal peace dear to all our hearts. Our long proved friendship *must* succeed, with God's

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* A. G. Gardiner, *The War Lords* (London, 1915), p. 7, quoting "high authority." According to Admiral Mark Kerr, *Land, Sea and Air* (London, 1927), pp. 174–175, "Madame von Bülow has stated that her husband told her that the Emperor, directly after signing the order for mobilization, stood up and faced the officers standing round him and, throwing down the pen, said: 'Gentlemen, you will live to rue the day when you made me do this.' " Kerr also quotes the late Henry White, former American ambassador to Italy and France, as saying that in the last days of July, 1914, Bülow told him [White]: "That peace party at the Palace is ruining us. We cannot get him to sign the mobilization"; and that Falkenhayn told him: "We cannot get the Emperor to sign the mobilization: he still has hopes of peace. We are forty-eight hours behind, and all the trains are getting jammed up." As a matter of fact, White was not in Berlin in the last days of July, 1914; he reached there immediately after hostilities had begun. He dined with Falkenhayn at the war office and made a memorandum of their conversation. In this memorandum, which has kindly been shown to the writer by Professor Allan Nevins and will be published in his forthcoming *Life of Henry White*, White quotes Falkenhayn as saying, "Those Peace People at the Palace had held back the mobilization of the German Army for nearly forty-eight hours after he himself had thought it necessary, because of Russian mobilization, of which he was aware several days before it was generally known." What Falkenhayn meant by saying that he was aware of Russian mobilization "several days before it was generally known" is not clear; perhaps he was thinking of the measures ordered by Russia on 26 July for the 'period preparatory to war' (see above, I, 510). But his statement strengthens the opinion that William II, like Nicholas II, was, at the last moment, reluctant to take the final step—in contrast with his more belligerent attitude on 5 July. Perhaps his hesitation is to be explained by another confidential remark of Falkenhayn to White: "Of course they never expected for one moment that England would enter the war, both in view of the Civil War then threatening Ireland, and of the well-known objection of certain members of the Cabinet, and indeed of the large majority of the British public (their Intelligence Department had told them) to joining any war; that the coming in of England had made all the difference in the world, both to the probable duration of the war [which he thought "was likely to last at least three or four years"], and possibly even to its outcome."

† Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 2 August; Dirr, p. 180. "Supreme confidence reigns in military circles in Berlin," was the impression of the British military attaché. Goschen to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 404.

> help, in avoiding bloodshed. Anxiously, full of confidence await your answer.*

This telegram probably explains the rumors which circulated in Berlin during the afternoon that Russia had asked for an extension of the time limit of the ultimatum. The British ambassador heard that

> Russia has informed the Imperial Government that the Czar has not been told that the Emperor was working at Vienna—and they have demanded three more hours to consider the German demand.†

So far as German or published Russian documents show, no such request was made by Russia. But the Tsar's telegram provided an excuse for an extraordinary step on the part of the German chancellor. In the evening he advised the Emperor to send the following telegram to the Tsar:

> I yesterday pointed out to your government the way by which, alone, war may be avoided. Although I requested an answer for noon to-day, no telegram from my ambassador conveying an answer from your government has reached me as yet. I have therefore been obliged to mobilize my army.
>
> Immediate affirmative clear and unmistakable answer from your government is the only way to avoid endless misery. Until I have received this telegram alas, I am unable to discuss the subject of your telegram. As a matter of fact I must request you to immediately order your troops on no account to commit the slightest act of trespassing over our frontiers.‡

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* Nicholas II to William II, 1 August; G 546, received 2.05 P. M.

† Goschen to Nicolson, private, [1 August]; B 510. Sverbeyev assured Goschen that Sazonov had telegraphed him that "no telegram announcing that the Emperor had consented to mediate at Vienna—has ever reached the Czar!" No such telegram from Sazonov has been published; such a statement, if made, was quite untrue. The American ambassador was also informed by the foreign office that "Russia had asked for two hours delay." Gerard to Bryan, 18 August; US, p. 92. Another version was that "negotiations are going on between Russia and France, because France suddenly shows little desire for war." Wenninger to war minister, 1 August; Dirr, p. 229.

‡ William II to Nicholas II, telegram, 1 August; G 600. The last sentence was put in at the special request of the chancellor. Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 1 August; G 599. The telegram was published in the German *White Book* of 1914

This telegram was sent off at 10.45 P. M., nearly six hours after the declaration of war had supposedly been presented to the Russian Government. Yet the Tsar was asked to forbid his troops to cross the frontier! It is no wonder that the Tsar was puzzled* or that the Russian foreign minister asked for an explanation—which the German ambassador was unable to provide.† To this day no satisfactory explanation has been vouchsafed.‡

Very little is known of what happened in St. Petersburg on this fateful day. Early in the morning the German ambassador wrote a personal letter to the court chamberlain, Count Fredericks, telling him of the ultimatum presented to the foreign office, in which he said:

> You know what that [mobilization] means in our country. We cannot conceal from ourselves that in such an event we are but a finger's breadth from war, a war which neither you nor we desire. I know how difficult it is to stop a machine set in motion. But the Emperor of Russia can do everything in this connection. I entreat you, do what you can to prevent a catastrophe.§

A copy of the letter was also sent to M. Krivoshein, the minister of agriculture, who, says Count Pourtalès, "was, to my knowledge, for peace."‖ Possibly the letter inspired the telegram which the Tsar sent to the German Emperor early in the

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without the hour of despatch, and made to appear as if sent *before* the German declaration of war.

* Paléologue, I, 203.

† Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 666.

‡ One explanation is that when the telegram was sent, no news had been received from Pourtalès of the presentation of the declaration of war—his telegram (G 588) was, in fact, never received—and that the purpose of the telegram was to give Russia a final chance to avoid war. The argument, however, is not very convincing.

§ Pourtalès to Fredericks, 1 August, 7.30 A. M.; G 539. It is said that the Empress and Fredericks tried to persuade the Tsar to cancel the order for mobilization. Nicholas seemed to weaken, but Sazonov turned to Fredericks and said: "For myself I have the courage to assume the responsibility of a war which will make Russia stronger and more powerful than she ever was. You, the court chamberlain, ask him to sign his own death-warrant, for Russia will never forgive him this humiliation." Countess Kleinmichel, *Memories of a Shipwrecked World* (New York, 1923), p. 23.

‖ Pourtalès, p. 79.

afternoon. In the late afternoon a ministerial council was held,* but of its discussion and decisions nothing is recorded.

Though it is not possible to be sure, it is probable that during the day the news was received that at midnight the French Government had resolved on war† and that the British Government had inquired of France and Germany if they should respect the neutrality of Belgium.‡ But there is no reason to suppose that this information affected the decision of the Russian Government: that decision had been made as far back as 29 July,§ and perhaps at an even earlier date.

Count Pourtalés did not complete the deciphering of the declaration of war until well past six o'clock, the hour at which he had been instructed to present it, and it was seven o'clock before he reached the Pechevsky Most. On entering the room of M. Sazonov, he asked if the Russian Government was willing to give a favorable reply to the German demand. The Russian minister replied in the negative, but said that he was ready to continue negotiations for a peaceful settlement. The ambassador repeated his question twice, and received the same answer. Thereupon, being much excited, he took from his pocket the declaration of war and read it aloud, pointing out, so he states, the reasons for the two versions; at the request of the minister, he signed the document and handed it over formally.

"The conversation between the ambassador and the minister took place," notes Baron Schilling, "while they were standing in the large office. After he had presented the note Count Pourtalès, losing all self-control, went to the window (the first from the corner) and, putting his hand to his head, began to weep, saying, 'I could never have believed that I should leave St. Petersburg under these conditions.' He then embraced the minister and went away, asking that he might be informed at the embassy of the arrangements made for his departure, since he himself was not capable at the moment of talking about anything." The arrangements were made with exemplary promptness. At 8 A. M. on 2 August the personnel of the German embassy and the Bavarian legation left St. Petersburg by special train via Finland.*

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* Schilling, p. 76.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July, sent 1 August, 1 A. M.; Romberg, p. 41.

‡ Benckendorff to Sazonov, 1 August; R 72.

§ See above, p. 108.

About 5 P. M. Sir George Buchanan had received a long telegram from King George addressed to the Tsar. It repeated *verbatim* the long statement sent by the German chancellor to Sir Edward Grey on the evening of 31 July, according to which the Austrian consideration of the Anglo-German proposals of mediation had been interrupted by the Russian general mobilization.† King George added a few words of his own:

> I cannot help thinking that some misunderstanding has produced this deadlock. I am most anxious not to miss any possibility of avoiding the terrible calamity which at present threatens the whole world. I therefore make a personal appeal to you to remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred, and to leave still open grounds for negotiations and possible peace.

He was, he said, ready to do everything in his power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations.‡ The ambassador arranged at once to be received by the Tsar, but it was 10.45 P. M. before he reached the imperial villa at Peterhof. M. Sazonov had provided the draft of a reply, but as this was "couched in too official language," the Tsar and the ambassador composed the telegram which was finally sent.§

The Tsar began by saying that he "would gladly have accepted your proposals had not German ambassador this afternoon presented a note to my government declaring war." Then, after a justification of the Russian attitude toward Austria and Serbia, he continued:

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* Pourtalès to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 588; Schilling, pp. 76–79; Pourtalès, pp. 83–88; Sazonov, pp. 212–213.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 31 July; G 513. See above, p. 277.

‡ Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 1 August, 3.30 A. M.; B 384. The King's appeal was formulated by Asquith, Tyrrell, and several secretaries on receipt of the German communication. The prime minister took it to the palace at 1.30 A. M., and roused the King to secure his consent. Oxford and Asquith, II, 10. The German ambassador was informed that the German statement had been forwarded to the Tsar. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 537.

§ Buchanan to Nicolson, private, 3 August; B 665. Buchanan, I, 204–205.

> Every proposal, including that of your government, was rejected by Germany and Austria, and it was only when favourable moment for bringing pressure to bear on Austria had passed that Germany showed any disposition to mediate. Even then she did not put forward any precise proposal. Austria's declaration of war on Servia forced me to order a partial mobilization, though in view of threatening situation, my military advisers strongly advised a general mobilization owing to quickness with which Germany can mobilize in comparison with Russia. I was eventually compelled to take this course in consequence of complete Austrian mobilization, of the bombardment of Belgrade, of concentration of Austrian troops in Galicia, and of secret military preparations being made by Germany. That I was justified in so doing is proved by Germany's sudden declaration of war, which was quite unexpected by me, as I had given most categorical assurances to the Emperor William that my troops would not move so long as mediation negotiations continued.

The telegram concluded with an appeal that "your country will not fail to support France and Russia in fighting to maintain balance of power in Europe."* The Tsar's statements were not altogether correct. Germany did put forward a "precise proposal," although it was not communicated to Russia until after the partial mobilization.† Nor was the mobilization ordered "in consequence of complete Austrian mobilization." The German declaration of war may have been "quite unexpected" by Nicholas II, but it was hard to believe that the Russian Government was, after the German ultimatum, in the least surprised. Whether the Tsar was misinformed by his ministers or whether he and the British ambassador were simply trying to make out as strong a case as possible for Russia cannot be determined.

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* Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 490. The ambassador added his own appeal for solidarity. "I would venture to submit with all respect that if we do not respond to Emperor's appeal for our support, we shall at end of the war, whatever be its issue, find ourselves without a friend in Europe, while our Indian Empire will no longer be secure from attack by Russia."

† See above, p. 240.

There is no absolute answer to the question whether Germany was justified in making the Russian general mobilization a *casus belli.* Once the German general staff had decided to fight a war on two fronts by an offensive against France while remaining on the defensive against Russia, the argument that Russia could not be allowed to complete her mobilization at leisure was unanswerable from the military point of view. From the political point of view the Russian contention that mobilization was intended to reinforce diplomatic pressure and did not necessarily mean war was equally sound. Russia could not accede to the German demand for demobilization without surrendering the only lever which might induce Austria-Hungary to negotiate. Germany would not content herself with mere mobilization because her general staff had no plan for dealing with the situation thus created. It is futile to try to refine the issue further.

Austria and Russia, 1–6 August

Shakespeare was fond of introducing in his greatest tragedies a grimly humorous scene which in the end served to intensify the moral of the tale. Fittingly enough the high gods provided such an interlude in the tragedy of July, 1914; for once the war had begun by the German declaration against Russia, both Russia and Austria-Hungary, the original protagonists, showed great reluctance to go to war with each other. Not until 6 August, or nearly a week after the German decision, did those two Powers find themselves at war with each other.

This, it may be said at once, was not the fault of Berlin. The German Government had notified Vienna that "we expect from Austria immediate *active* participation in the war with Russia," and the German Emperor had demanded of Francis Joseph that "Austria direct her principal forces against Russia."* To the latter request the Austrian ruler replied:

> As soon as my general staff learned that you were determined to begin the war against Russia at once and to carry it through with all energy, we here also came firmly to the decision to assemble our principal forces against Russia.
>
> You may rest assured that the utmost will be done on the part of my army to bring the great struggle to a successful conclusion.†

But he did not say that the Monarchy would declare war on Russia.‡ Moreover, the implication that Germany would carry through the war against Russia "with all energy" was, in view of the actual German plans, disconcerting, to say the least. This, together with an almost impertinent inquiry from General Conrad whether the German mobilization was directed "only against Russia or also against France,"§ may well have raised the suspicion that the Austro-Hungarian chief of staff was still thinking of going ahead with his operations against Serbia.|| The 'brilliant second,' as William II had once called his ally, seemed to belie the name.

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* See above, p. 270.

† Francis Joseph to William II, telegram, 1 August; A III 81, b; G 601. Conrad wished to include a reference to "the great technical difficulties arising from the fact that the movement [of troops] southwards is already under way, which could have been stopped two days ago"—a sly reminder of the German delay in coming to a decision. He also proposed to point out that the Austrian army in Galicia would provide "a covering for Germany's rear." But these were omitted by the Ballplatz from the telegram as sent. Conrad, IV, 159–160.

‡ The Russian ambassador had called on Berchtold and said that "he still hoped that it might be possible to remove the cause of the quarrel by direct negotiations." Berchtold replied by calling attention to "the numerous follies of Russia's Balkan policy," and said that an understanding might be possible if "they could make up their minds in St. Petersburg just *once* not to make the fate of the Balkan states the permanent and exclusive basis of their attitude toward us." Memorandum of Berchtold, 1 August; A III 99. Berchtold was, of course, merely fencing.

§ Conrad, IV, 161.

|| On 1 August Conrad suggested shifting his troops to Galicia and making Serbia a secondary front, but he was told that the popularity of a war against Serbia and the danger of a Serbian thrust against Budapest made it necessary to proceed with 'Case B.' Conrad, IV, 312. The shift to Galicia was not made in time, and defeat was the result.

So quite early on 2 August the German Government began to exert pressure. In an "urgent" telegram Herr von Tschirschky was instructed to inform the Ballplatz "immediately" that Germany was at war with Russia, "since Russian troops crossed our frontiers yesterday at several points and committed hostile acts."* "We expect from Austria," said the German chancellor, "the fulfilment of the obligations of her alliance and an immediate and energetic activity against Russia."† But since the Austro-Hungarian general staff wished to have at least forty-eight hours for completing the concentration of troops in Galicia,‡ Count Berchtold returned a non-committal answer to the German ambassador: "everything possible will be done here to facilitate active operations against Russia with our principal forces."§ On the next day the minister went so far as to submit to the Emperor a telegram instructing Count Szápáry to hand in a declaration of war.‖ At the request of Conrad, however, the telegram was not sent even on 4 August.¶

By this time the German Government had grown indignant, and the chancellor sent a crisp demand:

> We have been compelled to go to war on account of Austria's action, and have a right to expect that Austria should not seek to obscure this fact, but will openly announce that the threat of interference (mobilization against Austria) in the Serbian conflict compels Austria to go to war.**

Actually, Count Berchtold had refused to regard the Russian mobilization as a hostile act, but this peremptory demand brought him to terms. That same afternoon, the Wilhelmstrasse was informed that "the declaration of war against Russia would be made to-morrow morning."* Even so the general staffs continued to object,† and it was not until 6 P. M. on 6 August that Count Szápáry handed the Austro-Hungarian declaration of war to M. Sazonov.

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* The general staff reported at 4 A. M., that two squadrons of cossacks had attempted to destroy the railway at Johannesberg. Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 2 August; G 629. According to another report, "Russian troops have crossed the German frontier at Schwidden." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 2 August; A III 102.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 2 August, 6.35 A. M.; G 627.

‡ Conrad, IV, 166–167.

§ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 672.

‖ Berchtold to Francis Joseph, 3 August; A III 124. Prince Kudachev, counsellor of the Russian embassy, inquired at the Ballplatz "whether Austria was really bound to stand by Germany against Russia." He was answered by the counter-question whether "the Russian mobilization was not perhaps directed against Mongolia." Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 704.

¶ Conrad, IV, 173.

** Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 4 August; G 814.

The wording of that declaration is interesting:

> In view of the threatening attitude adopted by Russia in the conflict between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and Serbia; and of the fact that, according to a communication of the Cabinet of Berlin, Russia has seen fit as a result of that conflict to open hostilities against Germany; and whereas Germany is consequently at war with Russia; Austria-Hungary considers herself also at war with Russia from the present moment.‡

If, as Berlin claimed, Russian troops had attacked Germany, it was surely because of the German ultimatum and not, except indirectly, as a result of the Austro-Serbian conflict. Likewise no reference was made to the German declaration of war. In this manner did the facts have to be distorted in order to make it seem plausible that Austria-Hungary was merely fulfilling the obligations of Article I of the Austro-German alliance of 1879. The Russians do not appear to have protested against this version. They had decided not to declare war on Austria-Hungary;§ by waiting a few days they forced the Monarchy to assume that responsibility and were able to declare that they had been attacked. They could afford to be indifferent to the reasons alleged. But it was a curious outcome to the announcement of 24 July that "Russia cannot remain indifferent" to the Austro-Serbian dispute.

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* Memorandum of Bergen, 4 August; G 860.

† Memorandum of Bergen, 5 August; G 871. Their only reason was to give time for the Austrian concentration in Galicia.

‡ Szápáry to Sazonov, 6 August; R 79.

§ So Schebeko told Bunsen. Bunsen to Grey, telegrams, 1 and 2 August; B 450, 482.

CHAPTER XX

GERMANY AND FRANCE

The French Answer, 1 August

The French answer to the German ultimatum had to be given by 1 P. M. on Saturday, 1 August. The answer had been determined at the meeting of the cabinet the evening before. As the statement determined upon, that "France would be guided by her interests," was not likely to be satisfactory to Germany, as, furthermore, France might be compelled to declare war on Germany in consequence of the German action against Russia, it is not surprising that at 8 A. M. General Joffre addressed to the minister of war a letter demanding the mobilization of the French army. Asserting that Germany was carrying out a disguised mobilization and that five classes had been called up for 2 August, as a result of which the German army would be mobilized by 4 August, "thus gaining an advantage of forty-eight hours or even three days on us," he delivered a sharp summons:

> If the government delays in giving the order of general mobilization it will be impossible for me to continue to assume the crushing responsibility for the high function with which it has confidently entrusted me.*

At a cabinet meeting held an hour later, the general's demand was granted. "There was no protest, indeed no discussion." It was decided that the order should be issued at 4 P. M., barring some change in the situation, which would permit it to be known throughout France that same day and put into execution on Sunday.

During the morning Sir Francis Bertie communicated to M. Poincaré the telegram of King George to the Tsar.† The President replied that the "Emperor of Russia did not order a general mobilization until after a decree of general mobilization had been issued in Austria";* that Germany, "in effect," was mobilizing; that Russia was ready to continue the negotiations; and that "French Government did not quite despair of war being avoided."†

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* Recouly, 82–84. *Les armées françaises*, I, annex, 22.

† See above, p. 328.

This same note was struck by M. Viviani when he received Baron von Schoen, who, instead of waiting until one o'clock, came at eleven for the answer to his ultimatum. The French premier, in reply to the ambassador's question, said that "France will be guided by her interests." "You have a treaty of alliance?" queried Schoen. "Quite so" [*Parfaitement*]. The ambassador did not ask for his passports.

M. Viviani offered as an explanation of his hesitating answer the fact that since the evening before the situation had improved. Austria-Hungary had declared that she did not desire territorial aggrandizement in Serbia and was ready to discuss the Austro-Serbian question with the Powers.‡ Russia had accepted the British proposal that she should suspend her military proposals on condition that the other Powers did so.§ Wherefore he professed not to understand the reason for the German ultimatum to Russia or the threat of a diplomatic rupture with France. When the ambassador declared himself ignorant of the latest developments, the minister emphasized the "serious responsibility" which the German Government would assume "if, in such circumstances, it took an initiative which was not justified and of a kind which would irremediably compromise peace." Baron von Schoen confined himself to saying that "the attitude of France was not doubtful," whatever that might mean.*

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* This was apparently stated by the French ambassador in Russia (although he must have known that it was not true). Paléologue to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; F 118. The telegrams received from Vienna should have shown that it was not true.

† Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 403. Poincaré, IV, 489, places the interview in the evening, but Bertie's telegram was sent at 12.30 P. M.

‡ Schoen's version of Viviani's statement is slightly different: "Austria-Hungary had declared that she would not infringe on Serbia's territory or sovereignty." Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 571. In his circular telegram of that morning. Viviani described the Austrian *démarche* of the evening before as "vague." Viviani to ambassadors, 1 August; F 120.

§ This was not correct. So far from accepting the British proposal (B 309; see above, p. 261), Sazonov had modified Grey's formula to read that if Austria agreed to negotiate after stopping the advance of her troops on Serbian territory, "Russia undertakes to preserve her waiting attitude," as Paléologue himself had reported. Paléologue to Viviani, 31 July; F 113.

As the German ambassador did not announce his departure, M. Viviani informed the ministers that perhaps things could yet be arranged. But the Russian ambassador brought the news that Germany had required his government to demobilize, not only on the German front, but on the Austrian as well.† The French Government now hesitated no longer. At 3.55 P. M. the order for mobilization was issued.‡ It was followed shortly by renewed instructions to the covering troops not to cross the ten-kilometre line "except in case of definite attack." At 10.30 P. M. peremptory orders were sent to all arms that "for serious diplomatic reasons . . . no patrol, no reconnoitering party, no post, no soldier must be found to the east of the line indicated." No precautions were too great "with a view to assuring for ourselves the collaboration of our English neighbors."§

The order for mobilization was accompanied by a manifesto bearing the signature of the President of the Republic and the ministers, which affirmed that "mobilization is not war," but "in the present circumstances . . . the best means of preserving peace with honor." No one can say whether M. Viviani believed it.|| At any rate he was determined to leave the initiative to

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* Viviani to ambassadors, 1 August; F 125. Viviani, pp. 204–205. Poincaré, IV, 478–479. Cf. Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 428. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Romberg, pp. 42–43. Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 92.

† Poincaré, IV, 480.

‡ Immediately afterward Viviani came to the war minister to ask that the order be held up, for "an interview which he had just had with Herr von Schoen left him with some hope of an arrangement." But the telegram had already been put on the wires. "It is too late, the machinery is set in motion." Recouly, pp. 85–86. Viviani's "just" was disingenuous: he had seen Schoen at 11 A. M. Why he waited for more than four hours has not been explained. Possibly Viviani's visit was somewhat later, after his second interview with Schoen (see below, p. 337).

§ *Les armées françaises*, I, 80–81. "French will not attack," so the British military attaché reported, "and Minister of War is very anxious that it should be explained that this act of mobilization is purely defensive, he ended by saying, 'We rely on ourselves first and on you.'" Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 425.

|| "President Poincaré said in his message: 'Mobilization is not war.' To tell the truth, no one believed him. If it was not war, it was certainly something terribly near to it." Recouly, p. 116.

Germany, as he made clear in a second conversation with Baron von Schoen.

Shortly after three o'clock the ambassador had received a telegram from Berlin empowering him to grant the French Government two more hours for its reply to the demand for the occupation of Toul and Verdun.* He had not mentioned this in the morning interview with the French premier, but at 5.30 he went again to the Quai d'Orsay. He was not given an opportunity to make any demand, for M. Viviani stuck to his formula and said that the French mobilization "did not in any way indicate aggressive intentions"; "he could not," the minister declared, "abandon his hope for peace,"† and "there was absolutely no reason for the departure of Baron von Schoen."‡ This general point of view was conveyed to London:

> I am persuaded that in case war were to break out, British opinion would see clearly from which side aggression comes.§

Also to Vienna:

> There are no points of difference between Germany and France, and here the German attitude and the language of her ambassador can be explained only by the desire of Germany to precipitate war.‖

The position was very cleverly and fairly taken.

How long could it be maintained? At 11 P. M. M. Izvolski was informed from St. Petersburg that Germany had declared war on Russia. He went at once to M. Poincaré:

> In so tragic an hour [he said] I believe it my duty, Mr. President, to address myself to the chief of the allied state in order to put the question, "What is France going to do?"¶

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, "urgent," 1 August; G 543. There were rumors in Berlin of Franco-Russian negotiations occasioned by the reluctance of France to go to war. See above, p. 325.

† Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 598.

‡ Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Romberg, p. 44.

§ Viviani to P. Cambon, 1 August; F 127.

‖ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 93.

¶ Poincaré, IV, 495.

The French obligation was clear: to declare war on Germany. M. Poincaré expressed the opinion that the government would decide to honor the signature of France, and he summoned an immediate meeting of the cabinet. But he pointed out that a declaration of war would require the assent of Parliament, which could not meet for at least two days. He would prefer, he said, "to avoid a public debate regarding the application of the treaty of alliance," and, on account of England, "it would be better if the declaration of war were made, not by France, but by Germany"—which reveals how much better the 'imponderables' were understood in Paris than in Berlin. Furthermore, "it would be more advantageous for both the allies if France were to begin military operations only after mobilization was more advanced."*

The ministers did confirm the promise of the President that France would fulfil her obligations "unreservedly." She could not do otherwise. But it was decided to postpone action for ten days, in order to allow the mobilization to be completed. At the end of that period Parliament would be summoned.† "M. Izvolski preferred an immediate public declaration. But he finally contented himself with our reply and went away with a long face."‡ He need not have been discouraged. The probability was, as M. Poincaré observed, that Germany would attack France at once: the question of French action would settle itself.

London and Berlin, 1 August

The final decision of France was made without any assurance of British intervention and with the prospect that even if intervention was ultimately forthcoming, a British army would not be sent to the Continent.§ Curiously enough, on this same day, 1 August, the British Government was engaged in discussions with Germany not only concerning British neutrality but also with reference to the prospect of France remaining neutral.

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* Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Romberg, p. 45.

† Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August, sent 2 August, 3 A. M.; Romberg, pp. 46–47.

‡ Poincaré, IV, 496.

§ "The government is not favorable to a landing of British troops on the Continent, which it thinks would be badly received by public opinion." P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 1 August, received 10.05 P. M.; Poincaré, IV, 487.

This, it is hardly necessary to say, was not in accord with the wishes of the foreign office or the foreign secretary. On 31 July, apparently after the news of the German ultimata had been received, Sir Edward Grey's principal advisers expressed their views in very pointed terms. Sir Arthur Nicolson urged the immediate mobilization of the army: "it is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that possibly within the next twenty-four hours Germany will be moving across the French frontier." His chief agreed that "it should be considered early to-morrow."* Sir Eyre Crowe, whose minutes have been so often quoted in these pages, addressed to Sir Edward Grey a memorandum of passionate entreaty which is likely to remain the classic exposition of the policy of intervention.

> The theory [he wrote] that England cannot engage in a big war means her abdication as an independent State. She can be brought to her knees and made to obey the behests of any Power or group of Powers who *can* go to war, of whom there are several. . . .
>
> If the theory were true, the general principle on which our whole foreign policy has hitherto been declared to rest would stand proclaimed as an empty futility. A balance of power cannot be maintained by a State that is incapable of fighting and consequently carries no weight.

The assistant secretary of state discounted the uneasiness of business and financial circles, partly on the ground that "at the opening of any war in all countries there is a commercial panic," partly with the argument that German influence was at work. "It has been the unremitting effort of Germany," he continued, "to induce England to declare herself neutral in case Germany were at war with France and Russia." A German proposal which offered terms "of some value for France and Belgium" had been declined. Was neutrality now to be promised without any compensating advantages?* Crowe concluded by stating the case in its most naked aspects:

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* Nicolson to Grey, 31 July; B 368.

> The argument that there is no written bond binding us to France is strictly correct. There is no contractual obligation. But the *Entente* has been made, strengthened, put to the test and celebrated in a manner justifying the belief that a moral bond was being forged. The whole policy of the *Entente* can have no meaning if it does not signify that in a just quarrel England would stand by her friends. This honourable expectation has been raised. We cannot repudiate it without exposing our good name to criticism.
>
> I venture to think that the contention that England cannot in any circumstances go to war, is not true, and that any endorsement of it would be an act of political suicide.
>
> The question at issue is not whether we are capable of taking part in a war, but whether we should go into the present war. That is a question firstly of right or wrong, and secondly of political expediency.
>
> If the question were argued on this basis, I feel confident that our duty and our interest will be seen to lie in standing by France in her hour of need. France has not sought the quarrel. It has been forced upon her.†

Sir Edward Grey's reaction to this missive is unhappily not recorded, but his memoirs show that its argument was in line with his own thinking. He could not, however, determine British policy on so momentous an issue by the memorandum of a subordinate. Moreover, the cabinet had shown itself on 31 July strongly opposed to intervention. The *Times* on the morning of 1 August might say:

> Peace is not, at such a moment, our strongest interest, however dear it may be to us, and however earnestly we may strive to maintain it. Our strongest interest is the law of self-preservation, which is common to all humanity.

But the bulk of the Liberal press still argued for non-intervention.* Also this was the attitude of the business world. A member of the cabinet stated that

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* On this particular point, Grey held a different opinion. See above, pp. 258–259.

† Crowe to Grey, 31 July; B 369.

> a very large body of opinion, drawn not only from the great industrial centres of the North and East, but from the banking and commercial authorities in London, including the heads of the Bank of England, were adverse to any steps which might be construed into a resolve to take sides in the present dispute.†

Pressure was brought to bear on Lord Northcliffe, the owner of the *Times,* to keep England neutral, and a deputation of financiers visited Mr. Lloyd George, the chancellor of the exchequer.‡ In such circumstances, the prospects of persuading the cabinet to adopt his policy must have seemed slight to Sir Edward Grey. Accordingly—if one may judge from what happened during the day—the idea occurred to the foreign secretary that if he could not persuade his colleagues of the necessity of assisting France, it might be possible to find a way of keeping France out of the war.

On the morning of 1 August, before the meeting of the cabinet, he sent his private secretary, Sir William Tyrrell, to Prince Lichnowsky to hint that after the meeting he might be able to "make overtures which would be calculated to prevent the great catastrophe." In the colloquy which followed, Tyrrell asked whether Germany would also remain neutral if France did. The ambassador understood this to mean that "we would keep off France," whereas the British diplomatists really meant that "we should remain neutral against Russia also." This is Prince Lichnowsky's version.§ It is confirmed by a statement of Sir Edward Grey:

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* G 661. The *Westminster Gazette* had begun to waver. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 611.

† Lord Morley. Fitzroy, II, 558.

‡ Steed, II, 11. Lord Rothschild appealed to the German Emperor to send him a proposal which he could lay before his friends and which would find favor in both St. Petersburg and Vienna, and could be supported by them. Rothschild to William II, telegram, 1 August; G 580.

§ Lichnowsky, I, 49, 132. He recorded it in a memorandum written in August, 1914, immediately after his return from London, before anything had leaked out about the incident, and before Grey's statement in Parliament, as well as in the famous brochure, *My Mission to London*, written in 1916.

> It was reported to me one day that the German ambassador had suggested that Germany might remain neutral in a war between Russia and Austria, and also engage not to attack France if we would remain neutral and secure the neutrality of France.*

The foreign secretary thereupon telephoned to the ambassador, and received an assurance, which he promised to use in the cabinet meeting, that if France remained neutral, Germany would not attack her; Prince Lichnowsky certainly understood that France was to remain neutral "in a Russo-German war."†

Did Sir Edward Grey understand the contrary, that is, that Germany would remain neutral as between Austria and Russia? He has affirmed it in his memoirs.‡ But in reporting the matter to the ambassador in Paris, he said:

> German ambassador here seemed to think it not impossible, when I suggested it, that after mobilization on western frontier French and German armies should remain, neither crossing the frontier as long as the other did not do so. I cannot say whether this would be consistent with French obligations under her [*sic*] alliance.§

The last sentence clearly implies a Russo-German war. Similarly, he said to the French ambassador in London:

> The position was that Germany would agree not to attack France if France remained neutral in the event of war between Russia and Germany.||

On the other hand, it does not seem likely that both men should independently and identically have testified to their misunderstanding had there not been one. Possibly the explanation

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* Sir E. Grey, House of Commons, 28 August, 1914.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August, 11.14 A. M.; G 562. The ambassador gave the assurance on his own responsibility. A little later he reported to Berlin that Grey "wanted to make proposals to me this afternoon regarding England's neutrality, even in case we should have war with France as well as Russia." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August, 1.05 P. M.; G 570.

‡ Grey, II, 313; American edition, II, 331.

§ Grey to Bertie, telegram, 1 August; B 419.

|| Grey to Bertie, telegram, 1 August; B 426.

is that Sir Edward Grey, after his conversation with Prince Lichnowsky during the afternoon, realized his mistake, and modified his language to Paris accordingly.

The German ambassador's telegram announcing the overture from Great Britain reached Berlin just after the order for general mobilization had been signed. Generals von Moltke and von Falkenhayn had already left the palace, but they were recalled. The Emperor, the chancellor, Herr von Jagow and Admiral von Tirpitz were for accepting the British proposal, believing that "the Triple Entente was thereby rent asunder"* and the Emperor ordered the chief of staff to concentrate his armies against Russia. Moltke replied that this was impossible:

> We could not, on the spur of the moment, concentrate an army of millions on a new front—that would require continuous labor for a whole year to arrange. A mobilization plan once made could not be changed. If His Majesty insisted on marching the whole army eastward, we should no longer have an army ready for battle, but a confused mob of armed men lacking food, equipment and supplies.

The Emperor insisted, saying, "Your uncle would have given me a different answer"; which deeply wounded the chief of staff, who had "never pretended to be the equal of the old field-marshal." Moltke stood firm. Finally, he records:

> I succeeded in convincing His Majesty that our scheme of concentration, with the strongest forces against France and weak defensive forces on the Russian side, must be allowed to run its course if we wished to avoid complete confusion. I told the Emperor that after we had completed our concentration, we could then transfer the strongest forces to the East, but that the original concentration must be carried through without change. Otherwise I could not assume the responsibility.†

On this basis a compromise was proposed. A telegram, dictated by Falkenhayn,‡ was sent to London stating that Germany would accept the British proposal, provided England will, with all her armed forces, guarantee the unconditional neutrality of France in the Russo-German conflict and the maintenance of that neutrality to the final completion of that conflict.

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* Tirpitz, II, 17.

† Moltke, p. 19.

‡ Zwehl, p. 59.

In order to give time for negotiation with France, Germany promised not to cross the French frontier before 7 P. M. on Monday, 3 August, although the concentration of her armies would not be stopped.* The Emperor also telegraphed to King George:

> On technical grounds my mobilization which had already been proclaimed this afternoon must proceed against two fronts east and west as prepared. [Which was exactly the argument used by the Tsar the day before.] This cannot be countermanded because I am sorry your telegram came so late. But if France offers me neutrality which must be guaranteed by the British fleet and army I shall of course refrain from attacking France and employ my troops elsewhere. I hope that France will not become nervous. The troops on my frontier are in the act of being stopped by telegraph and telephone from crossing into France.†

The last sentence of the imperial telegram is significant. As a matter of fact a declaration of war‡ lay ready to send to France on receipt of the expected answer to the ultimatum;§ but in view of the altered situation, Baron von Schoen was instructed to "keep the French quiet for the time being."|| Even more important was the Emperor's order to stop the invasion of France, which led to another scene with the chief of the general staff. The German plan called for the occupation of Luxem-

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 1 August, 7.15 P. M.; G 578. On learning of the French mobilization, Bethmann repeated his promise, "on condition that France will also respect our frontier most strictly." Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 1 August, 11.30 P. M.; G 605.

† William II to George V, telegram, "urgent," 1 August; G 575.

‡ G 608.

§ Schoen's telegram (G 571) was received at 6.10 P. M. Probably it had not been deciphered and considered at the moment when the telegrams to England were drafted.

|| Jagow to Schoen, telegram, "urgent," 1 August, 8.45 P. M.; G 587.

burg by the Sixteenth Division on the first day, "in order to protect the Luxemburg railways from a French attack, since we needed them for the deployment of our forces," explains Moltke. At the demand of the chancellor, the Emperor ordered his adjutant to telephone to Trier to stop the movement of the division. The chief of staff, already in despair over the acceptance of the British proposal, now felt as if his heart would break.

> We were on the point of having our whole scheme of concentration thrown into confusion. . . . The schedule of every train is regulated according to the minute, and any change will have fatal consequences. I tried to show His Majesty that we had to use the railways of Luxemburg and must assure ourselves possession of them. I was cut short by his reply: I had only to use other railways in their place! The order stood.

Returning "shattered" [*gebrochen*] to his home, he burst into tears, refused to sign the order, and remained in the depths of despair.*

Moltke later expressed the opinion that "the Emperor would never have signed the order for mobilization if Prince Lichnowsky's telegram had arrived half an hour earlier."† Herr von Jagow telegraphed his best thanks for the British proposal, "which unfortunately arrived here after the proclamation of mobilization."‡ It is possible that if the German Government had not been so precipitate in declaring war on Russia, some kind of arrangement might have been patched up, for Russia had promised not to attack so long as negotiations continued, and the French, even if they had wished to do so, would not have dared to attack Germany, from fear of losing the support of Great Britain. On the other hand Moltke's graphic account reveals only too clearly how determined he was to have war with

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* Moltke, p. 22. He need not have worried. Early in the evening troops from the 69th regiment at Trier seized the Luxemburg station of Ulflingen and tore up the rails beyond it. Eyschen, minister of state of the Grand Duchy, to foreign office, telegram, 1 August, 9.30 P. M.; G 602.

† Moltke, p. 23.

‡ Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 1 August; G 579.

France. Even more significant was the language of William II when about ten o'clock that evening he informed the Austro-Hungarian ambassador of the British overture:

> Naturally [he said] he would demand a sure guarantee [*Faustpfand*] from France. He had the impression that France was scared to a high degree by the mobilization of Germany. In these circumstances it would be a question of persevering calmly but very decidedly in the course hitherto marked out; above everything he was determined to have a reckoning with France, and he hoped that he would succeed in doing this.*

One is therefore entitled to doubt if the acceptance of the British proposal, so far as the German Emperor was concerned, was sincere.

The German reply had not been received in London when Sir Edward Grey saw Prince Lichnowsky in the middle of the afternoon. Since he had not made a positive proposal—although the German ambassador, the German Government and the German Emperor appear to have regarded the sounding as a proposal,—he was free to act as circumstances warranted. Ostensibly nothing was settled at the cabinet meeting. To quote the account of the prime minister:

> There was really no fresh news this morning. Lloyd George, all for peace, is for keeping the position open. Grey declares that if an out-and-out and uncompromising policy of non-intervention at all costs is adopted, he will go. Winston [Churchill] very bellicose and demanding immediate mobilization. The main controversy pivots upon Belgium and its neutrality. We parted in fairly amicable mood.†

But it would seem that the cabinet did not adhere rigidly to the position taken the day before. The evasive reply of the German Government to the question about Belgian neutrality‡ evidently strengthened the foreign secretary's hand.* The cabinet agreed to the following declaration:

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* Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 2 August; A III 105.

† Oxford and Asquith, II, 10–11. By this time the prime minister had accepted the view of the foreign secretary: "Of course if Grey went I should go and the whole thing [the cabinet] would break up."

‡ "We should take no reply or a postponed reply as a refusal." Nicolson's minute on B 382.

> The reply of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium is a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium does affect feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which has been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country.†

This statement Sir Edward Grey was empowered to communicate to the German ambassador.

The cabinet, however, had gone much further than this, no doubt because the German ultimata had profoundly altered the situation.

> By August 1 a change in the point of view of the anti-war group was beginning to give shape to the attitude of the Cabinet as a whole . . . the first sign . . . was the expression of an opinion that we could not stand the German Fleet coming down the Channel, and within sight and sound of our shores, bombarding the French coast.
>
> It might be supposed that this suggestion came as a tactical move from a pro-French quarter made and designed to shake and sap the position of the anti-war section. It was no such thing. It came spontaneously from the anti-war quarter and was based, first, simply on the ground of feeling and sentiment. But on consideration it was reinforced by a very powerful argument of a different kind. . . . Had not the naval conversations placed France (if we stood aside) at a positive disadvantage? Had they not, in fact, created an obligation, in spite

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* The evening before a prominent leader of the Opposition, F. E. Smith (now the Earl of Birkenhead), wrote to Churchill: "I have no doubt that on the facts as we understand them—and more particularly on the assumption (which we understand to be certain) that Germany contemplates a violation of Belgian neutrality—the Government can rely upon the support of the Unionist Party in whatever manner that support can be most effectively given." Churchill, pp. 215–216; American edition, pp. 229–230.

† B 448, enclosure.

> of the express stipulations that they were not to do so? This consideration did not originate the suggestion of guaranteeing the French north and west coasts, but it clinched it.*

This point of view did not commit the cabinet to intervention, but its acceptance undoubtedly brought intervention a step nearer. Consequently Sir Edward Grey's conversation with Prince Lichnowsky took quite a different turn from what the latter had expected.

The foreign secretary read to the ambassador the declaration of the cabinet with reference to Belgian neutrality, and "kept returning to the question," so the ambassador reported. The ambassador, drawing the logical inference, asked whether Great Britain would engage to be neutral if Germany gave a promise to respect the neutrality of Belgium. Prince Lichnowsky was acting on his own initiative, and he did not know that the German chancellor three days before had asked Sir Edward Grey not to make the neutrality of Belgium a condition of British neutrality. But the question was awkward for the British minister. If he said, "Yes," there was the possibility that Germany might change her mind and agree—and Sir Edward was personally anxious that Great Britain should not remain neutral. He therefore replied:

> I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was

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* Grey, II, 1–2; American edition, II, 1–2. Churchill had foreseen this situation. In August, 1912, when the naval conversations took place, he wrote to Asquith and Grey: "Every one must feel who knows the facts that we have the obligations of an alliance without its advantages, and above all without its precise definitions." Churchill, pp. 112–113; American edition, pp. 115–116. Concerning the situation in 1914 he states that the question of the English Channel was one of Grey's two "cardinal points." "Whatever happened, if war came, we could not allow the German fleet to come down the Channel to attack the French ports. Such a situation would be insupportable for Great Britain. Every one who counted was agreed on that from a very early stage in our discussions. But in addition we were, in a sense, morally committed to France to that extent . . . the fact remained that the whole French fleet was in the Mediterranean. . . . Whatever disclaimers we had made about not being committed, could we, when it came to the point, honourably stand by and see the naked French coasts ravaged and bombarded by German Dreadnoughts under the eyes and within gunshot of our Main Fleet?" *Ibid.*, pp. 201–202; American edition, pp. 213–214.

> that our attitude would be determined very largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.*

He added, according to Prince Lichnowsky, that "for the present, there was not the slightest intention of proceeding to hostilities against us."†

The conversation then passed to the suggestion made during the morning that France and Germany might remain facing each other under arms without attacking. Was Grey in a position to say whether France would agree to this? asked the ambassador, who suggested that "the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed." Sir Edward replied that "he would inform himself,"‡ but that he "felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms" and that Great Britain must keep her hands free. Prince Lichnowsky's general impression was that

> if it is in any way possible, they want here to keep out of the war, but that the reply of the secretary of state to Sir Edward Goschen with reference to the neutrality of Belgium has created an unfavorable impression.§

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* The German Emperor commented contemptuously: "This drivel of Grey shows that he absolutely does not know what he is to do"—an exact statement.

† William II commented: "The liar! He told Lichnowsky so himself four days ago!"

‡ Grey did endeavor to inform himself. He telegraphed Lichnowsky's suggestion to his ambassador in Paris, and added, "I cannot say whether this would be consistent with French obligations under the alliance. If it were so consistent, I suppose French Government would not object to our engaging to be neutral as long as German army remained on frontier on the defensive." Grey to Bertie, telegram, 1 August; B 419. The ambassador, who was now most eager for intervention and was expecting otherwise to hear the cry of '*Perfide Albion*' (Bertie, I, 7), was quite taken aback by the suggestion. "I cannot imagine that in the event of Russia being at war with Austria and being attacked by Germany it would be consistent with French obligations towards Russia for French to remain quiescent. If French undertook to remain so, the Germans would first attack Russians and, if they defeated them, they would then turn round on the French." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 453. The matter was dropped the next day. Grey to Bertie, telegram, 2 August; B 460.

§ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 596. Grey to Goschen, 1 August; B 448. The German Emperor commented: "My impression is that Mr. Grey is a false dog who is anxious about his own meanness and false policy, but will not openly take his stand against us, preferring to let himself be forced thereto by us."

Sir Edward Grey did, in fact, refuse to formulate the conditions of British neutrality. As he telegraphed to Sir Francis Bertie:

> I have definitely refused all overtures to give Germany any promise of neutrality, and shall not entertain any such suggestions unless it were on conditions that seemed real advantages for France.*

For this refusal he has been severely criticised by those who for one reason or another resented Great Britain's participation in the war. On this point certain observations may be offered. (1) Sir Edward Grey was personally convinced that British interests required his country to go to the assistance of France, a conviction for which the conduct of German diplomacy in the previous decade was chiefly responsible. (2) He believed Austria-Hungary and Germany to have caused the crisis and Russia and France to have done their best to seek a pacific solution. (3) The decision of France to support Russia was taken beforehand. (4) At the moment of refusal, Germany had not declared war on France, and there was a possibility—remote, to be sure—that uncertainty about the action of Great Britain might cause her to stay her hand. A fairer criticism would be that he had 'let down' the German ambassador rather badly, although, in view of their personal good relations, this was doubtless not intentional.

Prince Lichnowsky understood the situation quite clearly: "there had been no proposal at all, but only a query which carried no binding engagement."† So he telegraphed to Berlin that there was "no positive English proposal" and that he had not carried out the instructions of the German chancellor for a formal negotiation.‡ King George had also to disabuse the German Emperor of his optimism by telegraphing that "there must be some misunderstanding" and that Sir Edward Grey would see Prince Lichnowsky the next morning.* The prince had to report that

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* Grey to Bertie, telegram, 1 August; B 419.
† Lichnowsky, I, 133.
‡ Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 603.

> suggestions of Sir E. Grey, which were founded on wish to secure England's permanent neutrality if possible, were made without previous sounding of France and without knowledge of mobilization, and have since been abandoned as entirely hopeless.†

As soon as King George's telegram reached Berlin, the Emperor sent for General von Moltke and said, "Now you may do as you wish." The chief of staff at once ordered the advance into Luxemburg, adding as a justification, "Since we have learned that a mobilization has been ordered in France . . ."‡ Early on the morning of 2 August German troops invaded the Grand Duchy in force.

Although and perhaps because he had declined to formulate the conditions of British neutrality, Sir Edward Grey on the same afternoon made a last effort to gather up any threads of peace,§ in spite of the fact that the German ultimata had expired at noon. He informed Berlin that according to a communication of the Russian Government, Austria-Hungary was ready to discuss with Russia and Russia was ready to accept a basis of mediation not open to the objections of her original formula.‖

> I still believe [he continued] that if only a little respite in

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* George V to William II, telegram, [1 August]; G 612. The King's statement that Lichnowsky and Grey had discussed "how actual fighting between German and French armies might be avoided while there is still a chance of some agreement between Austria and Russia" cleverly saddled Germany with the responsibility for the situation.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 631.

‡ Moltke, p. 23.

§ Sazonov had telegraphed that thanks to the "firmness and clarity" of Grey's language to Germany and Austria, "all hope of a peaceful solution was not exhausted." Sazonov to Benckendorff, telegram, 31 July; R 69; B 409. He told Buchanan that "if war was eventually averted, it would be in great measure due to the firm attitude adopted by Great Britain." Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 393.

‖ Grey evidently understood Sazonov's second formula (see above, p. 311) to imply that Russia would agree to a temporary occupation of Serbian territory by Austria as the preliminary to negotiation.

> time can be gained before any Great Power begins war it might be possible to secure peace. . . . Things ought not to be hopeless while Russia and Austria are willing to converse.*

He transmitted to St. Petersburg the information "from a most reliable source"† that Austria had informed Germany of her readiness to consider favorably his proposal for mediation between herself and Serbia, if indeed on condition that her military operations continue and Russia stop her mobilization against Austria. "If," he added, "in consideration of the acceptance of mediation by Austria, Russia can agree to stop mobilization, it appears still to be possible to preserve peace."‡

Sir Edward Grey did not know that M. Sazonov's statement of the Austrian readiness to negotiate was greatly exaggerated, if not deliberately misleading,§ and that Count Berchtold had in fact no intention of allowing mediation between Austria and Serbia.‖ He naturally assumed that both statements were made in good faith. Whether he was aware that he was simultaneously recommending two contradictory suggestions—for Austria-Hungary was insisting that her military operations continue, while Russia was demanding their cessation—does not appear from the documents. Probably what impressed him was that both Russia and Austria were ready to negotiate, that both had declared that their mobilizations need not mean war: the essential thing was to get the conversations started. Meanwhile, so he informed Berlin, the British Government was "carefully abstaining from any act that may precipitate matters," and he hoped that the German Government might be able "to make some use of the Russian communications."

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 1 August; B 411. A little later he transmitted the text of Sazonov's telegrams (nos. 1582, 1592; R 67 and Romberg, p. 39; see above, pp. 311–312). Grey to Goschen, telegrams, 1 August; B 417, 418.

† Mensdorff communicated privately—officially it had to come from Berlin, since the suggestion had been made through the German Government—Berchtold's telegram of 31 July (A III 65; see above, p. 219), but requested Grey not to refer to it officially, since Lichnowsky was still without instructions. Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 94.

‡ Grey to Buchanan, telegram, 1 August; B 422.

§ See above, pp. 313–314.

‖ See above, pp. 218–219.

The restraint of the British Government was commendable. At 1.45 P. M. information was received that steamers of the Great Central Railway and other British ships were being detained at Hamburg.* The admiralty wished to proceed at once to mobilization, for the German action was of course interpreted as the precursor of war. The authorization for this final step was, however, not granted.† Not until late that evening was the situation given up as irreparable.

GREAT BRITAIN'S PROMISE TO FRANCE, 2 AUGUST

If Sir Edward Grey refused to give to Germany a promise of neutrality or even to formulate the conditions of neutrality, he was not in a position to satisfy the demand of France for a promise of support. The cabinet had not been willing to grant this, in spite even of the eloquent appeal of M. Poincaré to King George. In consequence His Majesty was constrained to write a colorless—"wretched" is said to have been his own word‡—reply to the French President. The King expressed his admiration for "the restraint which you and your Government are exercising in refraining from taking undue military measures on the frontier," and declared that he was using his "best endeavours with the Emperors of Russia and of Germany towards finding some solution by which actual military operations may at any rate be postponed." And he had to conclude lamely enough:

> As to the attitude of my country, events are changing so rapidly that it is difficult to forecast future developments; but you may be assured that my Government will continue to dis-

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* Grey protested at once. "We are most anxious on our side to avoid any incident of an aggressive nature, and I hope German Government will be equally careful not to take any step that would make the situation between us impossible." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 1 August, 1.50 P. M.; B 402.

† Corbett, I, 28–29. The admiralty was able to recall to active service flag officers of the Third Fleet, to institute control of the wireless of merchant ships, and to order night guard by patrol and local defense flotillas. Asquith, who was also secretary for war temporarily, refused to cancel the orders for the summer training of the Territorial Army, although these troops were designated to guard the railway lines in the event of mobilization. Edmonds, I, 24.

‡ Steed, II, 15.

cuss freely and frankly any point which might arise of interest to our two nations with M. Cambon.*

M. Cambon and Sir Edward Grey must have been thoroughly sick of discussion; nevertheless they had to continue it on the afternoon of 1 August. The ambassador had done his best to prepare the ground for the conversation by communicating the declaration of the Italian Government that the war was not a defensive but an aggressive war.† But the foreign secretary had to reaffirm the view already expressed that "the present position differed entirely from that created by the Morocco incidents":

> Now, the position was that Germany would agree not to attack France if France remained neutral in the event of war between Russia and Germany. If France could not take advantage of this position, it was because she was bound by an alliance to which we were not parties, and of which we did not know the terms. This did not mean that under no circumstances would we assist France, but it did mean that France must take her own decision at this moment without reckoning on an assistance that we were not now in a position to promise.

When the ambassador said that he could not transmit such a reply and asked to be authorized to say that the cabinet "had not yet taken any decision," Sir Edward answered:

> We had come to a decision: that we could not propose to Parliament at this moment to send an expeditionary force to the continent.‡ Such a step had always been regarded here as

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* George V to R. Poincaré, 1 August; *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, p. 544.

† French embassy to foreign office, 1 August; B 406.

‡ That morning the prime minister, who had been acting as secretary for war since the Irish crisis of the spring, wrote to the chief of the general staff "'putting on record' the fact that the Government had never promised the French an expeditionary Force." Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, Bart.*, I, 154. The refusal of the British Government to send an army to France involved not only a political issue, but also a military problem. The plans of the two general staffs provided that "the first movement of the British advanced parties, stores, and so forth, should begin on the first day of [French] mobilization." The British general staff suggested that these parties should be warned, and that if mobilization, that is, British mobilization, came, they should proceed to France simultaneously with the order for mobilization. Edmonds, I, 24.

> very dangerous and doubtful. It was one that we could not propose, and Parliament would not authorize unless our interests and obligations were deeply and desperately involved.[*]

Beaten on the frontal assault, M. Cambon tried a flank attack by asserting that the French coasts were defenseless because the best French ships were in the Mediterranean.

> Will you allow Cherbourg and Brest to be bombarded [he asked], seeing that it was in agreement with you, to serve your interests as much as ours, that we have concentrated all our ships far from there?[†]

Grey tried to hedge:

> As long as we did not give Germany any promise of neutrality . . . the French might be sure that the German fleet would not pass through the channel, for fear that we should take the opportunity of intervening, when the German fleet would be at our mercy.

And he repeated that "we had no obligation" to help France or to be involved in war because of France's obligations to Russia. The ambassador admitted that there was no obligation "of this kind," but, he asked,

> In default of a formal alliance, is there not a moral obligation for you to help us, at least to lend us the support of your fleet, since it was on your advice that we moved ours away?

In the end, Sir Edward Grey promised to submit the question to the cabinet.[‡] But M. Cambon went away, "sure of nothing"; it was "the darkest hour of my career," he later remarked.[§]

[*] Grey to Bertie, telegram, 1 August; B 426.

[†] "Récit de M. Paul Cambon," in Recouly, pp. 52–53.

[‡] Grey to Bertie, 1 August; B 447.

[§] Recouly, p. 53. After leaving Grey, the ambassador reminded Nicolson that "it was at our request that France had moved her fleets to the Mediterranean, on the understanding that we undertook the protection of her Northern and Western coasts." Nicolson to Grey, 1 August; B 424.

The British minister was so impressed by the ambassador's argument that he spoke to Mr. Asquith with the object of having the matter settled the next day.* But late that evening—presumably after the news came that Germany had declared war on Russia†—he encountered Mr. Churchill and told him:

> You should know that I have just done a very important thing. I have told Cambon that we should not allow the German fleet to come into the Channel.‡

Evidently the prime minister had sanctioned such a communication, without waiting for the action of the cabinet. Mr. Churchill for his part was equally forward, for he returned to the admiralty and ordered the mobilization of the navy,§ although this had not been authorized.||

Perhaps they were encouraged to go ahead because they had reason to know that this policy would have the support of the Opposition. The principal Unionist politicians had left town the day before for the week-end. But a group of ardent interventionists, including Mr. George Lloyd (now Lord Lloyd), Mr. L. S. Amery, Mr. Wickham Steed, the foreign editor of the *Times,* Mr. Leo Maxse, the editor of the *National Review,* and General H. H. Wilson, the director of military operations on the general staff and the officer chiefly responsible for the Anglo-French military arrangements, fearing that "the Government are going to 'rat,'" consulted with each other, and then got in touch with Lord Edmund Talbot, one of the Oppo-

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* Grey's minute on B 424.

† Buchanan to Grey, telegram, 1 August, received 11.15 P. M.; B 445. The news was brought to Churchill at the admiralty, where he was entertaining some friends. He immediately excused himself and departed. Beaverbrook, pp. 34–36. He proceeded to the prime minister's residence and there met Grey.

‡ There is no record of this conversation in the published British or French documents.

§ This involved only putting the Third Fleet into commission, which would be manned by reservists. The First and Second Fleets had been on a war footing for days.

|| Churchill, pp. 216–217; American edition, p. 231. The order was issued at 1.25 A. M., on 2 August; Corbett, I, 29.

sition leaders who had remained in town. By evening the chief members of the party had been brought together, some of them having been "fetched" in motor cars. A meeting was held at Lord Lansdowne's house, and after telephoning to Mr. Asquith, it was decided to send him the next day a letter pledging the support of the Unionist party. Signed by Mr. Bonar Law, its leader, it read:

> Lord Lansdowne and I feel it our duty to inform you that in our opinion, as well as in that of all the colleagues whom we have been able to consult, it would be fatal to the honour and security of the United Kingdom to hesitate in supporting France and Russia at the present juncture and we offer our unhesitating support to the Government in any measures they may consider necessary for that object.*

The knowledge of the Opposition's sentiment must have greatly encouraged Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Churchill in their action.†

On Sunday morning, 2 August, before the meeting of the cabinet, the British statesmen were set upon by both the French and the German ambassador. Prince Lichnowsky, flattering himself that he had "succeeded so far in maintaining a feeling here that is thoroughly friendly to us," went to see Mr. Asquith at breakfast-time. The ambassador was "very *émotionné,*" the Englishman recorded in his diary. "Tears repeatedly stood in the eyes of the old gentleman," reported the German, "and he said to me: 'A war between our two countries is unthinkable.' " The ambassador urged that Germany, who had to deal with two opponents, was more likely to be crushed than France. The prime minister stated that a neutral attitude on the part of Great Britain would be rendered difficult by (1) the violation of Belgian neutrality and (2) "any attack by German warships on the wholly unprotected northern coasts of France, which the French, with good confidence of British support, had laid bare for the sake of their Mediterranean fleet." Prince Lichnowsky concluded that "for the present there is not the slightest intention of declaring war on us," and urged his government to refrain from "any sort of provocative measures."*

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* Steed, II, 7–8; Callwell, I, 152–155; Maxse, *Politicians on the Warpath*, pp. 54–55.

† "I supposed that a large majority of the Conservative Party would support action to help France, but that some opinion outside the Conservative front bench reserved its decision is certain." Grey, I, 337; American edition, I, 326–327. The French embassy was informed the same evening (1 August) of the Unionist decision. Charles-Roux, *Trois ambassades françaises*, pp. 44–45.

Meanwhile M. Cambon was busy with Sir Edward Grey. He had received a telegram from Paris announcing the violation of French territory at Cirey, Longwy and Delle and the German invasion of Luxemburg,† and demanded an immediate interview. With the text of the neutrality clauses of the Luxemburg treaty of 1867 in his hand, the ambassador evidently thought he had at last an irrefutable argument for British intervention. But Sir Edward Grey adopted the view taken by his predecessor who signed the treaty, that the obligation was collective only, and that therefore since Germany had violated her obligation, Great Britain was released from hers.‡ When Mr. Wickham Steed called at the French Embassy about midday, M. Cambon exclaimed, "I do not even know whether this evening the word 'honour' will not have to be stricken out of the British vocabularly."* Even an ambassador's nerves sometimes get on edge!

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 676. Oxford and Asquith, II, 11. Asquith added that Lichnowsky "was bitter about the policy of his Government in not restraining Austria and seemed quite heart-broken." The naval attaché was of the opinion that "the English will not for the time being approach German waters, and expect the same consideration from us." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 669. Before his visit to Asquith, Lichnowsky reported that the Belgian question would be decisive in determining the attitude of England. "On the other hand, should we respect Belgian neutrality, it is at least possible that England would remain neutral in case we treat France moderately in the event of victory." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 641. About noon the British post office stopped forwarding telegrams to Germany, and Tirpitz inquired "whether as a result of this fact we are to consider ourselves in a state of war with England." Tirpitz to Jagow, 2 August; G 654. Jagow asked the British ambassador for explanations. Goschen to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 483. Grey replied that "delay has been due to extraordinary congestion," for "even our own Government messages have been considerably delayed." Grey to Goschen, telegram, 2 August; B 483. By evening the lines were working again. Central telegraph office to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 686.

† Viviani to ambassadors, telegram, 2 August; F 136. Received in London at 8 A. M.

‡ Charles-Roux, pp. 58–59.

The cabinet met at eleven. "Main question resumed," says Lord Morley, "was the language to be held by Grey to Cambon in the afternoon":

> Grey admitted that we were not bound by the same obligation of honour to France as bound France to Russia. He professed to stand by what he had told Cambon in his letter of 1912, that we were left perfectly free to decide whether we would assist France by armed force. We were not committed, he always said, to action in a contingency that had not yet arisen and might never arise. No immediate action was entailed upon us, unless there was action against France in the Channel or the North Sea. So much then for the point of honour arising on the French Entente.†

But whatever "the point of honour" might be, Grey pressed for a confirmation of his assurance to M. Cambon. "Up to luncheon time it looked as if the majority would resign," says Mr. Churchill. Then the letter of Mr. Bonar Law arrived,‡ and "with some difficulty" it was finally agreed that Grey might tell Cambon that the British fleet would prevent the Germans from using the Channel as a basis of operations.§ At a second meeting at 6.30 the mobilization ordered by Mr. Churchill was confirmed. "The high-handed action of Germany," said Lord Morley, referring no doubt to the German invasion of Luxemburg,|| "was weakening the efforts of the peacemakers in the

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* Steed, II, 14.

† Morley, p. 10.

‡ Grey, II, 11, American edition, II, 7, questions whether the letter was a deciding factor.

§ "After the Cabinet a gathering of the anti-intervention section met at Beauchamp's: Lord Morley, Harcourt, McKinnon Wood, Pease and Samuel." Fitzroy, II, 559. Also Lloyd George and Simon. Morley, p. 14. "John Burns at once resigned, but was persuaded to hold on at any rate till the evening when we meet again." Oxford and Asquith, II, 12.

|| During the day Grey received from M. Eyschen, the head of the Luxemburg Government, three telegrams, two repeating the excuses offered by the German Government, the other a formal protest against the infraction of the Treaty of 1867. Eyschen to Grey, telegrams, 2 August; B 466, 467, 492. Measures directed at Great Britain, or seemingly so, were the unloading of sugar from British vessels in German ports and the detention of a British collier at Hamburg. Grey to Goschen, telegrams, 2 August; B 496, 503.

Cabinet, but he still had hope that mobilization would stop at the Navy."*

The motives for the decisions were recorded at the time by the prime minister:

> Happily I am quite clear in my mind as to what is right and wrong. (1) We have no obligation of any kind either to France or Russia to give them military or naval help. (2) The despatch of the Expeditionary Force to help France at this moment is out of the question and would serve no object. (3) We must not forget the ties created by our long-standing and intimate friendship with France. (4) It is against British interests that France should be wiped out as a Great Power. (5) We cannot allow Germany to use the Channel as a hostile base. (6) We have obligations to Belgium to prevent it being utilized and absorbed by Germany.†

The decision was eminently opportunist, in accordance with British tradition, and thoroughly practical, in conformity with what British interests at the moment required.

It remained for Sir Edward Grey to communicate the decision to the French ambassador. He gave M. Cambon a memorandum to the following effect:

> I am authorized to give an assurance that if the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.
>
> This assurance is of course subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place.

He went on to say that the government "had very large questions and most difficult issues to consider," that "they could not bind themselves to declare war upon Germany necessarily, if war broke out between France and Germany to-morrow," and that they were still considering whether they "should declare violation of Belgian neutrality to be a *casus belli*."* He added that on account of the "enormous responsibilities" in the British Empire, especially in India and Egypt, "it was impossible safely to send our military force out of the country," and that "to send so small a force as two or even four divisions abroad at the beginning of a war would entail the maximum of risk to them and produce the minimum of effect."† But M. Cambon was satisfied:

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* Fitzroy, II, 560. At 2 P. M., the order for the summer training of the Territorials was cancelled, and at 6 that for the army manœuvres. Edmonds I, 25.

† Oxford and Asquith, II, 12. Morley, p. 12, mentions only points (3) and (5).

> You can believe that I heaved a sigh of relief. I calculated that the game was won. All was over. A great country does not really make war by half. From the moment that it decides to do so on the sea, it is inevitably driven to do so on land as well.‡

But he was to spend an anxious time on the following day, for the situation was not quite so simple as he imagined.

GERMANY'S DECLARATION OF WAR ON FRANCE, 3 AUGUST

The French Government, it will be remembered, decided on the evening of 1–2 August to leave the initiative of a declaration of war to Germany, although it admitted its own obligation under the treaty with Russia to attack Germany. The original plan of the German Government had indeed been to declare war in case an unsatisfactory reply were received to the ultimatum addressed to France, and a declaration was prepared on 31 July. The French reply that "France would be guided by her interests" was disconcerting, but the plan was adhered to, and on the evening of 1 August, the declaration was revamped to meet the situation.

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* In reporting the conversation to Paris, Cambon represented Grey as saying that "the neutrality of Belgium is considered so important in England that at the cabinet summoned for this evening to settle the terms of the declarations to be made to-morrow to the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey will ask to be authorized to say that a violation of that neutrality will be regarded as a *casus belli*." P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 2 August; Poincaré, IV, 506–507.

† Grey to Bertie, telegram, 2 August; B 487.

‡ Recouly, p. 55. At the same time he advised that the chiefs of the Socialist party in France should address to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the British Labour party, a telegram urging the intervention of Great Britain on account of the unjustified aggression of Germany. P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 2 August; Poincaré, IV, 504–505.

> By this reply [it stated], France reserves the right to place herself on the side of our opponents, and is in the position to attack us in the rear with an army which has been mobilized in the meantime*. . . . Germany cannot leave to France the choice of the moment at which the threat to her western frontier shall become a reality, but, since she is threatened from two sides, is forced to proceed immediately to the task of defending herself.

The German ambassador in Paris was therefore to inform the French Government that

> His Majesty the German Emperor declares in the name of the Empire that he considers himself as being in a state of war with France.†

The declaration was, however, not despatched, presumably because the telegrams of Prince Lichnowsky aroused hope that France might be kept neutral by Great Britain.

When these hopes were dashed by King George's telegram to the Emperor, a council of the government was held about 3 A. M. on 2 August. The chancellor wished to send the declaration of war against France at once, "because we intend to march through Belgium." Generals von Moltke and von Falkenhayn declared this unnecessary, for "the war is already here," though how they did not explain. When Admiral von Tirpitz asserted that the violation of Belgium would bring England in, Herr von Bethmann asked the chief of the general staff to give it up, only to be told that there was "no other way."‡ The soldiers prevailed, and the chancellor informed the Emperor:

> In agreement with the minister of war and the general staff,

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* This was in fact the French intention. See above, p. 338.

† G 608.

‡ Tirpitz, II, 20–21. His statement that "the march through Belgium was obviously not hitherto known to [the chancellor]" is quite incredible. It is just conceivable that he did not know that the general staff had no other plan. Tirpitz' "general impression" that "the political leadership had completely lost its head" was accurate enough; Moltke said that "now he would have to take the political leadership into his own hands"; many foreign office telegrams of the next two days were drafted or inspired by him.

presentation of declaration of war on France not necessary to-day for any *military* reason. Consequently it will not be done, in the hope that France will attack us.*

The question was reopened at another conference held at 10 A. M., at which the Emperor was present. Chancellor and chief of staff argued for their respective contentions, but as the latter was able to point to "a whole list of hostile activities [*i. e.,* violations of frontier] by the French,"† and was supported by the secretary of the navy, Herr von Bethmann was again defeated.‡ Instead of issuing the declaration of war on France, he was instructed to explain to the British Government the reasons for the German action in Belgium.§ After the chancellor had departed, both Moltke and Tirpitz complained bitterly to the Emperor that the foreign office "had made no kind of preparations for this situation"‖—to which the chancellor might have retorted that the general staff, by its plan of campaign, had created the situation! More than twenty-four hours were to elapse before the declaration of war on France was finally despatched.

The interval was employed in diplomatic manœuvres to regularize the German position, first of all in Luxemburg. On 31 July M. Eyschen, the head of the Government of Luxemburg, had appealed to the French and German ministers for assurances that the neutrality of the Grand Duchy would be respected;¶ on the next day he asked that he be empowered to make an announcement to the parliament on Monday, 3 August.* The French Government replied that it intended to respect the neutrality of Luxemburg, but that its violation by Germany "would compel France to be guided by care for her defense and interests."† The German Government returned no answer, for the obvious reason that its plans called for the military occupation of the Grand Duchy. The occupation began, as has been seen,‡ on the evening of 1 August, and by early morning of the next day German troops were pouring across the bridges of Wasserbillig and Remich on their way to the city of Luxemburg.

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to William II, 2 August; G 629. Evidently the foreign office did not reconcile itself to the decision taken, for the director of the legal division, Dr. Kriege, arranged for instructions to the ambassador in Paris concerning the treatment of merchant ships, "when you deliver the declaration of war." Jagow to Schoen, telegram, 2 August, 6.20 A. M.; G 625. The chancellor had to inform the ambassador that he was not to present the declaration "just now." Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, 2 August, 9.10 A. M.; G 632.

† See below, pp. 368–369.

‡ Moltke had presented to Bethmann a long memorandum dealing with the political action required by the military situation. With reference to France he wrote: "I do not consider it necessary as yet to deliver the declaration of war to France; rather I am counting on it that by holding it back for the present, France will be forced by public opinion on her side to order belligerent measures against Germany, without any formal declaration of war being presented." Moltke to foreign office, 2 August; G 662.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 2 August; G 667.

‖ Tirpitz, II, 21–22.

¶ Mollard to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; Poincaré, IV, 472–473. Buch to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 486.

The Grand Ducal Government and the Grand Duchess both formally protested to the German authorities.§ General von Moltke proposed a brazen reply:

> To its great regret, the German Government was so suddenly faced with the necessity of sending forward a few troops on to Luxemburg territory for the protection of the German railways in Luxemburg that there was no time for it to make arrangements in advance with the Government of Luxemburg.||

This was obviously too 'tall' a story. Herr von Bethmann therefore replied that "no hostile action" was contemplated, the German measures being only for protection against an attack by the French;¶ and in a second communication, Herr von Jagow explained that "we have received reliable information according to which French armed forces are advancing on Luxemburg."** Full compensation was promised for any damage done.

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* Mollard to Viviani, telegram, 1 August; F 128. Buch to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 606.

† Viviani to Mollard, telegram, 1 August; F 129.

‡ See above, p. 345.

§ Eyschen to Jagow, telegram, 1 August; G 637 (the same telegram was sent to Grey and Viviani, B 466, F 131). Marie Adelheid to William II, telegram, 1 August; G 638. Buch to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 647.

|| Draft submitted by Moltke; G 639.

¶ Bethmann-Hollweg to Buch, telegram, 2 August; G 640.

** Jagow to Eyschen, telegram, 2 August; G 649. A commentary on the assurance that no hostile action was intended is provided by the fact that the general of the 16th division had orders to arrest "various high Luxemburg officials"! Buch to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 684.

The sequel is interesting. M. Eyschen replied that the German general was distributing a proclamation stating that

> since France, without regard to the neutrality of Luxemburg, has opened hostilities against Germany from Luxemburg territory, as has been established beyond a doubt, His Majesty has ordered that German troops should also move into Luxemburg.

This allegation, said the minister, was an error. "There is absolutely not a single French soldier on Luxemburg territory, nor is there any indication at all of a threat against neutrality on the part of France."* And the German official history of the war states that "in spite of a number of reports to the contrary, it was established that the French had not crossed the Luxemburg frontier."† The comedy was completed by the German general ordering the French minister to leave the country under pain of arrest.‡

The French Government was also asked to believe that the German measures indicated no hostile action, but were only for the protection of the railways under German management!§ This was communicated also to London, with the information that the measures were necessary because of "a threatening attack of the French,"‖ and to The Hague with the statement that "French armed forces were moving on Luxemburg."¶ The German foreign office might, however, just as well have saved the expense of the telegrams, for all the impression they made, and have spared itself the charge of hypocrisy.

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* Eyschen to Bethmann-Hollweg and Jagow, telegram, 3 August; G 730. Later he affirmed that "there is not one word of truth" in the report sent to Berlin that "on the evening of Saturday, 1 August, 650 French cyclists rode through Luxemburg territory." Eyschen to Jagow, telegram, 3 August; G 746.

†*Der Weltkrieg*, I, 106. The French troops had in fact received orders not to create any incident as a result of the German occupation of Luxemburg. *Les armées françaises*, I, 84.

‡ Mollard to Doumergue, 5 August; F 156. The general appealed to Berlin for instructions, but not receiving any, acted on his own responsibility. 16th division to foreign office, telegram, 3 August, Fuchs to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 787, 842. Moltke approved. Moltke to foreign office, 4 August; G 807.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, 2 August; G 642.

‖ Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 2 August; G 643.

¶ Jagow to Müller, telegram, 2 August; G 671

Apart from the legal aspects, the question of Luxemburg was of course merely a by-play in the last stage of the drama, for both the French and the German Government knew that the political interest of the former and the military necessity of the latter made war only a question of time. Nevertheless each wished to represent the other as the aggressor, partly with an eye to its own public opinion,* partly in the hope of influencing the attitude of Great Britain. Consequently each government was busily engaged on Sunday and Monday, 2 and 3 August, in accusing the other of violating the frontier and in transmitting the information to London, together with statements that its own troops had not crossed the line. With grave impartiality the British Government communicated the charges and denials to Paris and Berlin, and did not let itself be moved by statements which it could not control.

The precise facts, it need hardly be said, are exceedingly difficult to establish. The French contention is that the Germans were guilty of twenty-nine violations—sixteen on 2 August, ten on 3 August up to the declaration of war at 6.45 P. M.—in twenty-four places.† On 2 August German patrols crossed the frontier—to mention the chief incidents—at Longwy, along the Luxemburg border, at Cirey, in French Lorraine, at Saint-Marie-aux-Mines, in the Vosges, and at several places near the Gap of Belfort.‡ In this latter region, the patrol passed beyond the 10-kilometre line to Joncherey and killed a French soldier, Corporal Peugeot. This evoked a strong protest from the French Government, both to the German ambassador in Paris§ and directly to Berlin;|| to which the German Government replied at 10 A. M. on 3 August that "German troops have so far not crossed

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* "Small German detachments have crossed the French frontier and some minor collisions have already occurred on French territory. This enables the French Government to declare to parliament, which is summoned for Tuesday, that France has been attacked, and thus to avoid a formal declaration of war." Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 2 August; Romberg, p. 48.

† [Puaux], *Le mensonge du 3 août, 1914*, pp. 243–365, fully documented.

‡ For communication of these incidents to London, see B 473, 481, 507, 535, 558.

§ Schoen to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 705.

|| Viviani to J. Cambon, telegram, 2 August; F 139, G 722.

the frontier at all."* The German reply was apparently made in good faith, for it was given on the authority of a statement by General von Moltke to the chancellor.† But the next day the chief of staff admitted that the incident had occurred, "against express orders";‡ which is probably true, for it was his plan to leave the initiative to the French. According to the German official history, which concedes that a number of violations of the frontier took place, "nothing of these incidents was known to the German general staff at the beginning of the state of war."§ From what quarter came the initiative for these raids is not known; the German view is that they resulted from the zeal of subordinate officers.

On 3 August German patrols, according to the French, crossed the Lorraine border at Réméréville, Avricourt, Leintrey, and Rechicourt, and at 6 P. M. an airplane dropped bombs at Lunéville. The charges are doubtless well-founded, for that morning, permission was granted the German commanders "to move scouts across the border," as a reply to the alleged French violations.|| Nevertheless, the statement was made to London in the afternoon by the German Government that "up to the present time not a single German soldier has crossed the French frontier."¶

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* Jagow to Schoen, telegram, 3 August; G 716. London and Rome were told that "all French reports concerning crossing of the French frontier by German troops are complete fabrications." Jagow to Lichnowsky and Flotow, 3 August, telegrams; G 713, B 519. The German telegram was repeated to Paris by the British foreign office. Grey to Bertie, telegram, 3 August; B 529. The French replied that "bodies of two Germans, one an officer and the other either an officer or an under-officer are on French soil and the French authorities are in possession of their clothes and identification papers." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 613.

† Note 2 on G 722.

‡ Moltke to Jagow, 4 August; G 869.

§ *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 104, note 2.

|| Moltke to Jagow, 4 August; G 869. Bethmann informed the British ambassador that "in some cases as necessary measures of precautions German patrols had crossed German frontier." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 3 August, 4.10 P. M.; B 553. In the Reichstag the next day, however, the chancellor affirmed that "with one single exception" the order of the Emperor that "the French frontier was to be unconditionally respected" was "strictly obeyed."

¶ Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 3 August, 2.20 P. M.; G 742. Lichnowsky was instructed to publish the statement in the British press. Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, "urgent," 3 August; G 744. When the statement was communicated to the British foreign office, Crowe noted: "M. de Fleuriau repeated to me an hour ago that they have actually shot a number of German officers who were over the frontier." Minute on B 608.

Not all the French accusations were so well justified. The French embassy in London actually informed the foreign office, on the afternoon of 2 August, that

> they have received a telegram from the Havas Agency from Liège stating that 20,000 German troops have invaded France near Nancy.*

The foreign office appears to have accepted the story unquestioningly.† Incredulity was at a premium in those exciting days!

Some equally fantastic stories were, however, put out by the German Government. It asserted‡ that on 2 August "eighty French officers in Prussian officers' uniforms made an attempt to cross the German frontier at Walbeck west of Geldern [on the Dutch-German frontier] in twelve automobiles,"§ and that "a French physician, with the aid of two disguised officers, attempted to infect the wells of Montigny, a suburb of Metz, with cholera bacilli."‖ The German general staff, to its credit, protested against the use of such tales until it had verified them.

Apart from these stories, the Germans have contended that detachments of French soldiers crossed the frontier in twenty places and patrols in thirty-six.¶ The more important instances, which the German Government endeavored to exploit on 2 and 3 August, were the following: (1) A cavalry raid at Altmünsterol, east of Belfort, in Upper Alsace; (2) violations by infantry in the passes of the Vosges;* (3) an attempt to blow up the Cochem tunnel, on the Moselle railway; (4) the flying of airplanes over German territory, one of which was shot down at Wesel; (5) the dropping of bombs from planes at Mainz and Nuremberg.†

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*Communication from French embassy 2 August; B 486.

† Crowe, when informing the German ambassador, "let it be understood that this news would make a bad impression on the cabinet, which was to meet in the course of the evening to renew its discussions, and perhaps might not be without influence on its final decision." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 689.

‡ The report was sent from Düsseldorf. 8th army corps to general staff, telegram, 2 August; G 670. The authorities at Düsseldorf got it from Geldern. Governor of Düsseldorf to Bethmann-Hollweg, telegram, 3 August; G 768.

§ Jagow to Lichnowsky, Below and Müller, telegrams, 2 August; G 677. Crowe regarded the allegation as "a joke"; B 471. But it was transmitted to Paris. Grey to Bertie, telegram, 2 August; B 505. The French denied the story "categorically." Bertie to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 541. Viviani to P. Cambon, telegram, 3 August; F 146. Grey thereupon informed Lichnowsky that "there is no truth whatever in the report." Grey to Lichnowsky, 3 August; B 542. The ambassador duly informed Berlin. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 782.

‖ Jagow to Flotow and Lichnowsky, telegrams, 2 and 3 August; G 690, 710.

¶ Graf M. Montgelas, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 25 June, 1919. Count Montgelas prints the military reports of eighteen violations in an article, "Grenzverletzungen vor Kriegsausbruch, 1914," in *KSF*, V, 977–982 (October, 1927).

The French Government, when informed by the British foreign office of these charges‡—the German Government did not protest directly to Paris—declared that a military aviator had indeed lost his way in Alsace and landed at Mülhausen,§ but had returned to Belfort, and that "no person, male or female, has received instructions to blow up the tunnel of Cochem or any other tunnel." Concerning violations of the frontier by French troops, it professed to have no information; indeed, "it would appear impossible by reason of the strict orders issued."||

The orders were strict. On 2 August General Joffre had informed the French Government that it would be necessary to reoccupy "at the proper time" certain positions beyond the 10-kilometre line "without, however, penetrating German territory." At 2.10 P. M. in view of the German violations of the frontier, "the government gave the general *complete liberty* of movement for the execution of his plans, although they might lead to crossing the German frontier." Joffre thereupon removed the prohibition against crossing the 10-kilometre line, but in communicating the order to the commanders he added:

> However, for national reasons of a moral character and for imperative diplomatic reasons, it is indispensable to leave the entire responsibility for hostilities to the Germans. Consequently

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* At Markirch (near St. Marie-aux-Mines, where the French alleged a German violation), Metzeral, and St. Amarin. General staff to foreign office, 2 and 3 August; G 663, 739; *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 105, note 1. The Wolff Agency announced on 3 August that "companies of French soldiers" had occupied these towns, and the chancellor personally drafted a telegram (G 717) to be sent to London and Rome; but the telegram was countermanded by the political director of the foreign office.

† Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 2 August; Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegrams, 2 and 3 August; G 664, 693, 725. Goschen to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 477.

‡ Grey to Bertie, telegram, 3 August; B 540.

§ Reported by general staff to foreign office. Memorandum of Mirbach, 3 August; G 752.

|| Bertie to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 609.

> and until new orders, the covering troops will confine themselves to driving all attacking forces back from the frontier, without pursuing them further and without entering upon enemy territory.

On the morning of 3 August it was ordered that "if there are incidents, they must start and develop only on French territory."*

The French, unlike the Germans, have never admitted that their troops violated the frontier. Since most of the offenses alleged by the Germans occurred on the evening and night of 1 August, it is possible that local commanders, on learning of the order of mobilization and before receipt of the telegram sent at 10.30 P. M. repeating the prohibition against passing the 10-kilometre line,† were too anxious to discover what was happening along the frontier and sent out patrols. It is also possible that forest rangers crossed the line. The German official history, it may be noted, while maintaining that certain specified violations occurred, remarks, somewhat vaguely:

> Reports of the advance of whole companies at Gottesthal . . . were later proved incorrect, as well as a number of other reports, by investigations made after the events.‡

It concedes also that the violations were contrary to the orders of the French general staff.

Little is known about the German allegations of French aircraft flying over Germany,§ except in the case of the throwing of bombs on Nuremberg. This story was derived from a report of the 3rd Bavarian army corps, was welcomed by the military authorities because it would permit them to treat France as an enemy "without waiting for a diplomatic document,"|| and was promptly published by the Wolff Bureau, besides being communi-

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* *Les armées françaises*, I, 84–87.

† See above, p. 336.

‡ *Der Weltkrieg*, I, 105, note 1.

§ In addition to the charges mentioned above, it was claimed that French aircraft were seen in the Eifel, on the right bank of the Rhine near Cologne, at Saarburg in Lorraine, at Neustadt-am-Hardt on the upper Rhine (General staff to foreign office, 3 August; G 739), and at Coblenz (J. Cambon to Doumergue, 6 August; F 155).

|| Wenninger to war minister, 2 August; Dirr, p. 230.

cated to the British and Italian Governments. In fact no better means of arousing the German public and of stirring neutral sympathy could be desired. Yet the tale was without foundation. The Prussian minister in Munich reported:

> The military report, circulated also by the *Süddeutsche Korrespondenz-Bureau,* to the effect that *French* aviators had dropped bombs to-day in the vicinity of Nuremberg, has not so far been confirmed. Simply some unknown aircraft were seen, which apparently were not military planes. There is no evidence of the dropping of bombs, and still less, naturally, that the fliers were French.*

The railway authorities at Nuremberg appear to have informed the local commander that bombs had been dropped on the lines between that city and Kissingen and Ansbach. Later they declared the information to be inaccurate, and the military commander telephoned this to the general staff in Berlin. The latter —for obvious reasons—did not promptly inform the foreign office of the mistake.† Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg was therefore entitled to believe, at noon on 3 August, that the allegation was true.

Since the French Government, contrary to German hopes and expectations, and in spite of its charges of German violations of the frontier, did not issue a declaration of war, the German Government was forced to take the initiative.‡ At 1.05 P. M. on 3 August, instructions were sent to the ambassador in Paris to inform the French Government as follows:

> Up to the present German troops have been ordered to respect the French frontier in the strictest manner,§ and have everywhere

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* Treutler to Bethmann-Hollweg, 2 August, received 3 August, afternoon; G 758.

† Montgelas, *Leitfaden zur Kriegschuldfrage*, pp. 182–183. In the *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschaft* of 18 May, 1916, a Dr. Schwalbe was allowed to publish a statement of the municipal government of Nuremberg to the effect that the reports of bombs being dropped on the city either before or after the declaration of war were false.

‡ Wenninger to war minister; 3 August; Dirr, p. 232.

§ Not quite true. Permission had been given to patrols to cross the frontier. See above, p. 367.

strictly obeyed. On the other hand, in spite of the assurance with reference to the 10-kilometre zone, French troops yesterday crossed the German frontier at Altmünsterol and on the mountain-road in the Vosges and still remain on German territory. A French aviator, who must have flown across Belgian territory, was shot down yesterday in an attempt to destroy the railway at Wesel. Several other French airplanes, as has been established beyond any doubt, flew over the Eifel region yesterday, and these must have also passed over Belgian territory. Yesterday French airmen dropped bombs on the railways near Karlsruhe and Nuremberg.

The ambassador was therefore to say that "thus France has forced us into a state of war" and to demand his passports and leave, after turning over German interests to the American embassy; the communication was to be made at 6 P. M.*

According to the German ambassador, this telegram was received by him in so mutilated a condition that it was impossible to decipher it accurately.†

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Schoen, telegram, "urgent," 3 August; G 734. The original draft prepared by Jagow read, in the last paragraph: "We have to state that this constitutes a breach of the peace on the part of France and the inauguration of a state of war, as well as a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by France, and protest against it." Why this protest was converted into a declaration of war has not been explained. Perhaps the German Government did not feel sure enough of the alleged violations and the military authorities insisted on a downright declaration so that they could go ahead with their operations. Bethmann communicated the document in the original draft to the British ambassador, apparently after it had been converted into a declaration of war and despatched, and requested that it be brought to the "immediate notice" of Grey. Goschen to Grey, telegram, 3 August, 4.10 P. M.; B 553.

† The original and the mutilated versions are as follows:

ORIGINAL: "Deutsche Truppen hatten bis jetzt Befehl, französische
RECEIVED: "Deutsche Erwehrungen hatten Brennerei kel italienischer

Grenze strengstens zu respektieren, und diesen
Botschafter. Wir würden Grenze strengstens respektiert und avisiert

überall strikt befolgt. Dagegen haben trotz Zusicherung der 10 Kilometre
Juli strikt befolgen. Dagegen haben trotz körperlich 10 Ihnen

Zone französische Truppen schon gestern bei Altmünsterol und
Zone französisch aneinander schon Elena bei alt mü ansehen erol und

auf Gebirgsstrasse in Vogesen deutsche Grenze überschrit-
Hypothek Gebirge Strasse, Ubereinkunft iu ge sen ante Howard ultramontan

ten und stehen noch auf deutschem Gebiet. Französischer Flieger, der
und angesichts noch auf relativ Gebiet. Französische Flieger der

belgisches Gebiet überflogen haben muss, wurde bei Versuch, Eisenbahn
Belgien Gebiet traité begründet kurz zu warten wurde bei Versuch Bassora

> It was clear, however [so he wrote after the war], that air attacks had been made by the French on Nuremberg, Karlsruhe and Wesel, that I was to ask for my passports at 6 o'clock, to hand over the Germans to the protection of the American ambassador, and leave. There was no time to make an inquiry as to the illegible part. As I knew from other sources that we felt bound to declare war in consequence of a French air attack on Nuremberg, I had to make up my mind to fall back on the little that could be clearly understood from the telegram, to justify the declaration of war.[*]

There are three curous features in this statement. (1) The "other sources" from which Baron von Schoen learned of the intentions of his government are not indicated in the published documents. (2) Although he twice on 3 August asked for the repetition of another telegram which had arrived in mutilated form,[†] he

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bei Wesel zu zerstören, schon gestern herabgeschossen. Mehrere andere
bei Wesel zu zerstören. Schon gestern herab mp. Mehrere andere
Französische Flugzeuge sind gestern über Eifelgebiet zweifelsfrei
französische kts Nowoje Wremja sind gestern über Eifel-Gebiet Zuzug frei
festgestellt. Auch diese müssen belgisches Gebiet überflogen
festgestellt. Auch diese müssen Belgien Gebiet Renouard begründet
haben. Gestern warfen französische Flieger Bomben auf Bahnen bei Karlsruhe
haben. Gestern warf französischer Flieger Bombe auf Bahn bei Karlsruhe
und Nürnberg. Frankreich hat uns somit in Kriegszustand versetzt.
und Nürnberg. Frankreich hat Krieg sonach Saragossa Kriegszustand versetzt.
Bitte Ew. Exz., vorstehendes heute nachmittag 6 Uhr dortiger Regierung
Bitte Abbröcklung Acker heute nachmittag 6 Uhr dortiger Regierung
mitteilen, Ihre Pässe fordern und nach Übergabe der Geschäfte an ameri-
mitteilen, Ihre Pässe fordern und nach Übergabe der Geschäfte an ameri-
kanische Botschaft abreisen." G 734.
kanischen Botschafter abresien." G 734a.

[*] Schoen, pp. 182–183.

[†] Schoen to foreign office, telegrams, 3 August; G 776 (*en clair*), 809 (ciphered). The message which he wished repeated was a telegram from Jagow (G 716) informing him that "a rupture of diplomatic relations is imminent on account of the continued violation of the frontier by French troops," so that this could hardly have been his "other source." According to Schoen, "in both telegrams [that is, G 716, and the declaration of war, G 734] the very same portions of the text, namely, those that concerned the frontier violation by the French troops, were made unreadable by the transposition of the code-ciphers, and in fact by unmistakably systematic falsification. Moreover, it is a striking fact that the two German telegrams were over five hours on the way, but a telegram of the French ambassador in Berlin, sent almost at the same time as the second one, was only three hours on the way. And this telegram was not garbled." Schoen to Barnes, 16 November, 1928; *American Historical Review*, XXXV, 78 (October, 1929). Poincaré, IV, 525, denies that the French at that time possessed the German cipher. The thing remains, as Schoen says, "a riddle."

did not, in a telegram sent at 8.30 reporting the execution of his instructions, refer to any mutilation of the telegram containing the declaration of war.* He considered it sufficient to explain the matter on his return to Berlin. He claims to have protested to M. Viviani against the mutilation, but the French minister denied the charge emphatically. (3) According to the record of the French telegraph service, the telegram was received from Berlin by two routes, and it is asserted that the second copy, which was received at 5 P. M., was not mutilated.† Since neither this nor the mutilated version has been published in facsimile, this particular point cannot be verified.

But even if Herr von Schoen's account be fully accepted and the French argument rejected, it was none the less extraordinary that he should be willing to assume the responsibility for a declaration of war on the basis of a mutilated telegram. Even though he were convinced of the inevitability of war, one would suppose that he would take all possible care to keep the formal record clear. And his conduct is all the more strange in view of his own conciliatory nature and his genuine regret over the outbreak of war.

Whatever the real motives of his action may have been, he presented himself at the Quai d'Orsay at 6.45 P. M. on 3 August, and communicated a declaration of war to M. Viviani which was based on the mutilated telegram of 1.05 P. M.

> The German administrative and military authorities [it read] have established a certain number of flagrantly hostile acts committed on German territory by French military aviators. Several of these have openly violated the neutrality of Belgium by flying over the territory of that country; one had attempted to destroy buildings near Wesel; others have been seen in the district of the Eifel, one has thrown bombs on the railway near Karlsruhe and Nuremberg.

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* This 8.30 P. M. telegram has not been published in the German documents. The version of its contents given in the text is that supplied by the French secret service, which was later able to decipher the telegram in large part.

† A. Aulard, "Ma controverse avec le professeur Delbrück," *Revue de Paris*, XXIX, iii, 33-41 (1 May, 1922). Schoen's reply is given in *Die Nation*, July, 1922.

> I am instructed, and I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that in the presence of these acts of aggression the German Empire considers itself in a state of war with France in consequence of the acts of this latter Power.*

Although the declaration omitted Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's charges of frontier violations on land, it reproduced fairly enough his allegations about aerial violations. The objections to the case made out by the German Government lay in its inability to substantiate its charges. The Nuremberg incident was known, a few hours after the declaration was despatched, to be untrue. No trace was ever reported of the aviator who was supposed to have been shot down at Wesel,† and no proof was adduced of the other actions mentioned.

The French premier "formally challenged the inaccurate allegations of the ambassador," which he denounced to the chamber of deputies on the following day as "wretched inventions," and recalled the French protest against the German violations of French territory. But there was nothing more to be said. M. Viviani accompanied the ambassador to his car: mutual bows. That same evening Herr von Schoen and his staff departed in a special train to Switzerland.‡

The French ambassador in Berlin had more difficulty in returning to his own country. He asked to be allowed to leave via Holland or Belgium, or later by way of Switzerland. To none of these would the German Government consent; it suggested that the ambassador go to Vienna. Finally it fixed upon Copenhagen, to which M. Cambon submitted under protest. The journey to Denmark, which began on the evening of 4 August, was accomplished in great discomfort. At Kiel soldiers entered the train and attempted to search the baggage of the party, and before the Danish frontier was reached, M. Cambon was forced to pay in gold the cost of the train. This treatment was all the more strange because every facility was provided for the departure of the Russian and British ambassadors.*

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* Schoen to Viviani, 3 August; F 147, G 734b.

† Bethmann admitted to Goschen that "news of French aviators having been shot down has not been confirmed." Goschen to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 553. Yet the statement was allowed to stand as one of the justifications of the declaration of war!

‡ Viviani to French representatives abroad, 3 August; F 148. Viviani, pp. 212–216. Schoen, p. 184.

That war between Germany and France could have been avoided after 1 August is most unlikely. But if the strategy of the general staff forced the German Government to take the initiative of the declaration of war, it would have been well advised to adhere to its original plan of basing the declaration on the refusal of France to promise neutrality, for that argument would at least have been defensible from a military point of view. As it was, by resorting to what were frivolous pretexts, Germany placed herself in the position of premeditated aggressor. The effect on the *moral* of France and the opinion of the rest of the world was incalculable. If the German Government thought this of small consequence, it was because there was absolute confidence in German victory.

Two Speeches

On the afternoon of 4 August, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg and M. Viviani addressed the German and French parliaments respectively. Each had to explain and to justify the state of war. Each selected such facts as suited his thesis, for each had to convince his audience of the rightness of his conduct and the iniquity of the enemy.

The German chancellor started from the assumption that "in the works of peace we have become strong and powerful, and have thus aroused the envy of others." In the crisis Germany had tried to localize the conflict.

> All governments, especially that of Great Britain, took the same attitude.† Russia alone asserted that she had to be heard in the settlement of this matter. . . .
>
> As soon as the first definite information regarding the mili-

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* J. Cambon to Doumergue, 6 August; F 155. Cf. Goschen to Grey, 6 August; B 671. Charles-Roux, *Trois ambassades françaises*, pp. 208–223.

† Hardly correct. See above, I, 491–492, 514; II, 6, 40, 69, 160.

> tary preparations in Russia reached us, we declared in St. Petersburg in a friendly but emphatic manner that military measures against Austria would find us on the side of our ally, and that military preparations against ourselves would oblige us to take counter measures; but that mobilization would come very near to actual war.*
>
> Russia assured us in the most solemn manner of her desire for peace, and declared that she was making no military preparations against us.
>
> In the meantime, Great Britain, warmly supported by us, tried to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg.†

After 28 July, said the chancellor, the Emperor, at the request of the Tsar, had tried to mediate between Austria-Hungary and Russia. In spite of this Russia had mobilized against Austria.

> We come now to 31 July [he continued]. The decision was to be taken at Vienna. Through our representations we had already obtained the resumption of direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg, after they had been for some time interrupted. But before the final decision was taken at Vienna, the news arrived that Russia had mobilized her entire forces and that her mobilization was directed against us also.‡ The Russian Government . . . did not notify us of this mobilization, nor did they ever offer any explanation.§

Therefore Germany had called on Russia to demobilize "as the only measure which could still preserve the peace of Europe," and the ambassador in St. Petersburg had been instructed to say that "in case our demand met with a refusal, we should have to consider that a state of war existed."

> The ambassador has executed these instructions. We have not yet learned what Russia answered to our demand for de-

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* The notification said that "mobilization would mean war"; G 219. See above, pp. 8–9.

† Certainly a great exaggeration. The proposal for a conference was rejected out of hand, and was not mentioned by the chancellor.

‡ Misleading. See above, pp. 277–278.

§ The Tsar explained that it had been ordered for "technical reasons." See above, p. 267.

> mobilization. Telegraphic reports on this question have not reached us.*

Therefore the Emperor had ordered German mobilization.

With reference to France Herr von Bethmann said that in spite of the French answer, which "was an evasion, if not a refusal," of the "direct question whether she would remain neutral," the order had been given that "the French frontier was to be unconditionally respected." "With one single exception," it had been "strictly obeyed." France had promised to respect a zone of 10 kilometres on the frontier.

> What really happened? Aviators dropped bombs, and cavalry patrols and French infantry detachments appeared on the territory of the Empire. Though war had not been declared, France thus broke the peace and actually attacked us.

After some references to Belgium and Great Britain,† Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg concluded with these words:

> Gentlemen, so much for the facts. I repeat the words of the Emperor: "With a clear conscience we enter the lists." We are fighting for the fruits of our works of peace. The fifty years are not yet past during which Count Moltke said we should have to remain armed to defend the inheritance that we won in 1870. Now the great hour of trial has struck for our people. But with clear confidence we go forward to meet it.‡

The French premier took with him to the session of the chamber of deputies the text of the alliance with Russia, prepared to read it in justification of his policy. This proved to be unnecessary, for the deputies were carried away by a message from the President of the Republic.

> France [said M. Poincaré] had just been the object of a violent and premeditated attack, which is an insolent defiance of the

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* The telegram of Pourtalès reporting the refusal of Russia to demobilize (G 588) did not in fact reach the foreign office.

† See below, pp. 392, 405, 407.

‡ *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, pp. 436–439.

laws of nations. Before any declaration of war had been sent to us, even before the German ambassador had asked for his passports, our territory had been violated.*

According to M. Viviani, this attack was "the last act of a plan" which he proposed to explain. For three weeks before the ultimatum was presented to Serbia, he said, the Austro-Hungarian Government had concealed its demands; it had "on several occasions given an assurance that their claims would be extremely moderate." Although they had turned out to be "excessive," Serbia "submitted to them almost without reserve."

> This submission, which constituted a success for Austria-Hungary, a guarantee for the peace of Europe, was not unconnected with the advice tendered to Belgrade from the first moment by France, Russia and Great Britain.

It was "with natural astonishment" that those Powers learned of the Austro-Serbian rupture and of the German threat of "incalculable consequences" if the dispute were not localized.

> Need I, gentlemen, point out to you the contrast between the threatening expressions used by the German ambassador at Paris† and the conciliatory sentiments which the Powers of the Triple Entente had just manifested? . . .
>
> Nevertheless, . . . we immediately, in agreement with our allies and our friends, took a conciliatory course and invited Germany to join in.
>
> We have had from the first moment regretfully to recognize that our intentions and our efforts met with no response at Berlin.
>
> Not only did Germany appear wholly unwilling to give to Austria-Hungary the friendly advice which her position gave her the right to offer,‡ but from this moment and still more in the following days, she seemed to intervene between the Cabinet of Vienna and the compromises suggested by the other Powers.

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* Message of the President of the Republic; F 158.

† Baron von Schoen tried to avoid the appearance of making threats. See above, I, 490.

‡ Germany's efforts in favor of direct conversations between Vienna and St. Petersburg were not mentioned.

Nevertheless, the negotiations continued, "or, to speak more accurately, the Powers of the Triple Entente tried to continue them." In vain:

> All the efforts made by Great Britain, with the adherence of Russia* and the support of France, to bring Austria and Serbia into touch under the moral patronage of Europe were encountered at Berlin with a predetermined negative of which the diplomatic despatches afford the clearest proof.

When the Russian Government, "noting the persistent failure of these efforts and faced by the Austrian mobilization† and declaration of war," resorted to partial mobilization, it explained to Berlin that its measures were "without any offensive character toward Austria" and "not in any degree directed against Germany," which the German foreign minister "acknowledged without demur." Nevertheless, on 31 July,

> the German Government . . . addressed an ultimatum to the Russian Government under the pretext that Russia had ordered a general mobilization of her armies, and demanded that this mobilization should be stopped within twelve hours.‡
>
> This demand, which was all the more insulting in form because a few hours earlier§ the Emperor Nicholas II . . . had asked the German Emperor for his mediation, was put forward at a moment when, on the request of England and with the knowledge of Germany, the Russian Government was accepting a formula of such a nature as to lay the foundation for a friendly settlement of the Austro-Serbian dispute and of the Austro-Russian difficulties by the simultaneous arrest of military operations and of military preparations.||

Finally, Germany, "without waiting for the acceptance by the

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* Russia did not accept Grey's formula of 30 July; see above, p. 311.

† M. Viviani did not explain that only partial mobilization had at that date been ordered in Austria.

‡ The language is not very clear. If it was meant to convey the impression that Russia had not ordered a general mobilization at the time of the German ultimatum, it was quite misleading.

§ Actually two days earlier.

|| The second Russian formula (see above, p. 311) was not known in Berlin when the ultimatum was despatched, but Viviani may not have been aware of this.

Cabinet of St. Petersburg of the English proposal," declared war on Russia.

From the morning of 25 July, M. Viviani asserted, "Germany had prepared for the transition of her army from a peace footing to a war footing." He enumerated the steps taken, including from 28 July the summoning of individual reservists.* "Could these measures, pursued with implacable method," he asked, "leave us in doubt of Germany's intentions?"

> On 31 July, Germany, by proclaiming a 'state of danger of war,' cut the communications between herself and the rest of Europe,† and obtained for herself complete freedom to pursue against France in absolute secrecy military preparations which . . . nothing could justify. . . .
>
> We knew that Germany was mobilizing under the shelter of the 'state of danger of war.'
>
> We learned that six classes of reservists had been called up.

On 2 August, "in contradiction to the peaceful declarations of the German ambassador in Paris, . . . German troops crossed our frontier at three different points," invaded Luxemburg, and threatened Belgium. Since then the German attacks had been "renewed, multiplied and accentuated." The German ambassador "did not deny them‡ or express his regret for them." Finally the declaration of war had been presented. "Need I, gentlemen," asked the premier, "lay stress on the absurdities of these pretexts which they would put forward as grievances?"

M. Viviani then explained the Grey-Cambon letters of 1912 and the British promise to defend the northern coasts of France. And he concluded:

> Gentlemen, these are the facts . . . Germany can reproach us with nothing.

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* Bethmann asserted in his speech that "for the sake of the peace of Europe we had, up till then [31 July], deliberately refrained from calling up a single reservist."

† Telegraphic and telephonic communication with France appears to have been broken, but the statement was rather sweeping.

‡ He was certainly instructed to deny them, though he may not have done so. See above, pp. 366–367.

> Bearing in silence in our bosom for half a century the wound which Germany dealt us we have offered to peace an unprecedented sacrifice. . . .
>
> No one can honestly believe that we are the aggressors. . . .
>
> Gentlemen, we proclaim loudly the object of their attack—it is the independence, the honor, the safety, which the Triple Entente has regained in the balance of power for the service of peace. The object of the attack is the liberties of Europe, which France, her allies, and her friends, are proud to defend. . . .
>
> France, unjustly provoked, did not desire war, she has done everything to avert it. Since it has been forced upon her, she will defend herself against Germany. . . .
>
> We are without reproach. We shall be without fear. France has often proved in less favorable circumstances that she is a most formidable adversary when she fights, as she does to-day, for liberty and for right.*

Between the "facts" of Herr von Bethmann and the "facts" of M. Viviani there is a wide discrepancy. Each made incorrect or misleading statements, each left much unsaid. But neither could have been expected to explain to an audience keyed up to the highest pitch of emotion and patriotism how the thing had happened. Rather each had to present a case calculated to secure parliamentary support. From that point of view both speeches were highly successful. No questions were asked, no dissenting voices were raised: unanimous votes of confidence and credit were accorded the German chancellor and the French premier by their respective legislatures. That, and not the garbled record presented, is the historical significance of the two speeches.

* Speech of the president of the council, 4 August; F 159.

CHAPTER XXI

GREAT BRITAIN AND GERMANY

Belgium and the European Crisis

The promise of the British Government to defend the northern coasts of France against a German naval attack was almost immediately overtaken by events, for the German strategy did not contemplate an attack on France otherwise than by an invasion across the territory of Belgium. Such action by Germany involved a violation of the Treaty of 1839 which declared Belgium to be "neutral in perpetuity." The statement of Herr von Jagow to the budget committee of the Reichstag on 29 April, 1913, that

> Belgian neutrality is provided for by international conventions and Germany is determined to respect those conventions;

the remark of General von Heeringen, the Prussian minister of war, that

> Germany will not lose sight of the fact that the neutrality of Belgium is guaranteed by international treaty;*

and the admission of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg on 4 August, 1914, that the entry of German troops on Belgium territory

> is a breach of international law . . . a wrong:

all make clear that the German Government considered itself bound by the obligation assumed by the Prussian Government in 1839.

Great Britain was also committed to observe her signature of the treaty. In 1913 Sir Edward Grey had said that

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* Beyens to Davignon, 2 May, 1913, quoting the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung;* Belgian I 12, enclosure.

> he was sure that this government would not be the first to violate the neutrality of Belgium, and he did not believe that any British Government would be the first to do so, nor would public opinion here ever approve of it.

So long as that neutrality was not violated by any other Power, Great Britain would certainly not send troops into Belgian territory.*

With respect to France, M. Poincaré appears to have assured the Belgian minister in Paris that

> France would never take the initiative in violating our neutrality, but that if the German armies should enter Belgium and we should not be strong enough to drive them back, the Government of the Republic would consider themselves justified in taking whatever steps they thought expedient to defend French territory, either upon their own frontier or, if the general staff thought it more expedient, to advance to meet the German armies.†

This latter contingency was indeed provided for, for 'Plan 17,' which governed the operations of the French armies in 1914, contained directions to be followed in case "the theatre of operations . . . should be extended to neutral territory."‡

The reaction of the Belgian Government to these several assurances has not been revealed, at least officially. Since it was determined to defend its neutrality against all comers, it arranged its military forces in such a manner that it could resist invasion from any direction. Of the six divisions, one was stationed at Ghent and a second at Antwerp, as if to repel a British landing; two more were concentrated at Mons and Namur, on the French side; one was sent to Liège; and the last was kept in Brussels as a reserve.* These dispositions, made early in July, 1914, were arranged, however, on the assumption that aggression would have to be dealt with only on the part of Germany, and permitted an easy concentration in northeastern Belgium in case the German armies came across the Maestricht Appendix, or farther south, as circumstances might demand.† But the Belgian Government did not admit its apprehensions officially. Not only did the Belgian foreign minister on 2 August assure the German minister that Belgium did not doubt the "perfect correctness" of Germany's intentions,‡ but, according to the British minister, "the Belgian authorities were really convinced that there was nothing to fear from Germany."§ It will be seen that no appeal was made by the Belgian Government until Germany showed her hand.

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* Grey to Villiers, 7 April, 1913; *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, p. 350. In 1906 plans were discussed between the British and Belgian general staffs for the cooperation of 100,000 British troops with those of Belgium. The Belgian understanding was that "the entry of the English into Belgium would take place only after the violation of our neutrality by Germany." These conversations are given in *B. D.*, III, 187–203. In 1912 there were new conversations, in the course of which the British representative remarked that "the British Government, at the time of the recent events [the Agadir crisis], would have immediately landed troops on Belgian territory, even if Belgium had not asked for help"; to which the Belgian representative replied that "their consent would be necessary for this." *Collected Diplomatic Documents*, p. 360. The British Government may have interpreted its obligation to imply that it must defend the neutrality of Belgium even if that state did not intend to do so.

† Guillaume to Davignon, 22 February, 1913; Belgian II 1.

‡ *Les armées françaises*, I, 56.

From the very beginning of the crisis, however, there was considerable anxiety in Brussels. Fearing that "events might move rapidly," the Belgian Government on 24 July forwarded to its representatives to the Powers signatory of the Treaty of 1839 instructions as to the steps to be taken "if the prospect of a Franco-German war becomes more threatening." When so directed by telegram, they were to present in the several capitals a note stating that Belgium "will strive unflinchingly to fulfil" the duties imposed upon her by treaty, and that "all necessary steps to insure respect of Belgian neutrality have been taken by the government."

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* *L'action de l'armée belge* [report of the army command] (Paris, 1915), p. 2.

† Lieutenant-General De Selliers de Moranville [chief of the Belgian general staff in 1914], *Du haut de la tour de Babel* (Paris, 1925), pp. 194–204.

‡ Circular of Davignon, 2 August; Belgian I 19. Davignon told the British minister that "Belgian Government have no reason whatever to suspect Germany of an intention to violate neutrality." Villiers to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 476.

§ Villiers to Nicolson, private letter, 12 August; B 670, note. The French minister noted on 29 July that "the government appears to believe that its neutrality will be respected." A. Klobukowski, *Souvenirs de Belgique, 1911–1918* (Brussels [1928]), p. 76.

> It is scarcely necessary [the note continued] to dwell upon the nature of these measures. They are intended solely to enable Belgium to fulfil her international obligations; and it is obvious that they neither have been nor can have been taken with any intention of taking part in an armed struggle between the Powers or from any feeling of distrust of any of those Powers.*

The position thus assumed was entirely loyal and unexceptionable.

During the next few days disturbing, not to say alarming, reports were received from the Belgian ministers in Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg.† On 28 July the foreign minister, M. Davignon, went so far as to ask the minister in Berlin to "telegraph if measures have already been taken with a view to the mobilization of the German army."‡ In addition, leave was stopped, two of the six divisions were ordered brought up to full peace strength, and preparations were made for prompt mobilization.§ As the reports from Berlin continued to be pessimistic,|| the decision was taken to bring the whole army to a reinforced peace footing by calling up the last three classes of reservists,¶ "solely as a matter of precaution," according to the official announcement.**

On the morning of 31 July the German minister, Herr von Below-Saleske, assured M. Davignon, *à propos* of the German assurances given in 1913, that "he was certain that the sentiments expressed at that time had not changed."†† In the afternoon the French minister, M. Klobukowski, spontaneously

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* Circular of Davignon, 24 July, with copy of the note; Belgian I 2.

† Beyens to Davignon, 25 and 26 July; Belgian II 6, 8. Errembault de Dudzeele to Davignon, 26 July; Belgian II 9. L'Escaille to Davignon, telegram, 26 July; Belgian II 7.

‡ Davignon to Beyens, telegram, 28 July; Belgian II 13. The reply has not been published.

§ Below to Bethmann-Hollweg, 28 July; G 403. Villiers to Grey, 28 July; B 243. The British minister was informed that "the Belgian Government . . . have determined to offer resistance to the utmost of their power should the integrity or neutrality of Belgium be assailed from any quarter."

|| Beyens to Davignon, 28 July; Belgian II 12, 14.

¶ Circular of Davignon, 29 July; Belgian I 8.

** Below to Bethmann-Hollweg, 30 July; G 540.

†† Davignon to Beyens, Guillaume and Lalaing, 31 July; Belgian I 12.

stated that "no incursion of French troops into Belgium will take place, even if considerable forces are massed upon the frontiers of your country."[*] These statements reassured the Belgian Government. But the proclamation of 'threatening danger of war' in Germany was ominous, and in the evening the order for mobilization was issued.[†] When therefore the British minister, Sir Francis Villiers, came to announce that his government had asked France and Germany if they would respect the neutrality of Belgium and that

> Sir Edward Grey assumes that Belgium will to the utmost of her power maintain neutrality and desire and expect other Powers to observe and uphold it,[‡]

M. Davignon adopted a confident tone. Not only, he said, would Belgium "neglect no effort" to maintain her neutrality, if, contrary to her expectations, it were not respected:

> I did not fail to state [he remarked] that our military forces, which had been considerably developed in consequence of our recent re-organization, were sufficient to enable us to defend ourselves energetically in the event of the violation of our territory.[§]

On the following day, 1 August, when it was learned that the German Government had declined to answer the British query,[||] and when France officially declared that she would respect the neutrality of Belgium, provided other Powers did so,* the Cabinet of Brussels felt it necessary to act. The ministers abroad were instructed to present the note sent to them on 24 July.† More significant was the hint conveyed to the German minister, both before and after the French *démarche,* that

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[*] Davignon to Beyens, Guillame and Lalaing, 31 July; Belgian I 9. Klobukowski to Viviani, telegram, 31 July; F 119.

[†] Villiers to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 377. The decision was taken, so the British minister was informed, "firstly, in view of similar measure in Holland; secondly, to prove for external and internal purposes that Belgium is determined to defend neutrality; thirdly, because reorganization having been so recently introduced, some confusion and delay may occur, and the Belgian Government are of course desirous that an emergency should not find their preparations unpremeditated." Villiers to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 415. The official estimate was that mobilization would give Belgium 250,000 men. The British minister did not expect more than 180,000 men, and "even with this force there would be a deficiency of artillery and other equipment." Villiers to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 345.

[‡] Grey to Villiers, telegram, 31 July; B 351.

[§] Davignon to Beyens, Lalaing and Guillaume, 31 July; Belgian I 11. Villiers to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 395.

[||] Beyens to Davignon, telegram, 1 August; Belgian I 14.

> it would be of the greatest importance to receive a declaration from the Imperial Government that the frontiers of the kingdom would be respected by Germany.‡

Officially, optimism was maintained on Sunday, 2 August,§ stimulated no doubt by an interview given by Herr von Below to the *Soir,* in which he said: "It may be that the conflagration will extend to your neighbor's house, but your own will be spared."

But the news of the violation of Luxemburg|| and the information brought in person by the Belgian consul in Cologne that troop trains were passing that city "every three or four minutes" in the direction of Aix-la-Chapelle¶ prepared the Belgian foreign office for serious developments. And, in fact, Herr von Below called at 7 P. M. to present the ultimatum which had been drafted on 26 July and despatched from Berlin three days later.

It had been modified slightly at the last minute by the omission of the offer to compensate Belgium at the expense of

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* Davignon to Beyens, Guillaume and Lalaing, 1 August; Belgian I 15. Viviani to Klobukowski, telegram, 1 August; F 122.

† Circular telegram of Davignon, 1 August; Belgian I 16.

‡ Below to foreign office, telegrams, 1 August; G 581, 584. Circular of Davignon, 2 August; Belgian I 19.

§ The British minister was told once more that "Belgian Government have no reason whatever to suspect Germany of an intention to violate neutrality." Villiers to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 476. "To the last minute, the Belgian Government believed that Germany would modify a plan which appeared faulty both politically and strategically: the violation of Belgian territory would bring about the entry of Great Britain into the war; in the second place, the passage by the valley of the Meuse would disperse the German armies over a large area instead of concentrating them in the east, where their numerical superiority and a very powerful artillery would give an opportunity to insure to a vigorous offensive a success which would have been able to dominate the entire campaign." Klobukowski, *Souvenirs de Belgique*, p. 89, note.

|| Eyschen to Davignon, telegram, 2 August; Belgian I 18.

¶ "Récit de M. le Baron de Gaiffier d'Hestroy," in Recouly, pp. 129–130.

France* and the reduction of the time limit from twenty-four to twelve hours. But the statement that "French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur" was left intact,† and the German minister had been directed to create the impression that "all instructions in this matter had arrived only to-day." He was also to suggest that the Belgian Government should withdraw its troops to Antwerp and that Germany would be prepared to protect Brussels "against internal disturbances."‡ It was to be spared neither injury nor insult. The note was presented to Mr. Davignon in the original German, a language which he did not understand.

The Belgian cabinet met under the presidency of the King from 9 P. M. to midnight. If we may believe the testimony of the director of the political department of the foreign office, Baron Gaiffier d'Hestroy, who, however, was not present, there was no divergence of opinion about the answer. The draft of a reply prepared by the political director was approved in principle, and the final form was passed between 2 and 3 A. M. At 7 A. M., the political director presented it in person at the German legation, declining to make any comment. It was taken at once, according to instructions, by the military attaché in his car to General von Emmich, who was waiting at Aix-la-Chapelle to put his troops in motion for the capture of Liège.§

The Belgian reply was as manly a document as one government ever addressed to another. It stated that the German note "has made a deep and painful impression." If, contrary to the expectations of Belgium and the assurances of France, the French army violated the neutrality, "the Belgian army would offer the most valiant resistance to the invader." The note then continued:

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* See above, p. 152.

† By way of justifying this charge, the German Government forwarded to Brussels the story of the eighty French officers in Prussian uniforms crossing the German frontier at Walbeck and the information that France "has already commenced hostilities against us to-day (dropping of bombs by aviators, crossing of the frontier by cavalry patrols) in violation of international law." Jagow to Below, telegrams, 2 August; G 677, 709. When Below admitted that these violations had occurred in Germany, the secretary-general of the Belgian foreign office observed that "in that case he could not understand the object of this communication." Memorandum of Baron van der Elst, 3 August, 1.30 A. M.; Belgian I 21. The German minister had to report that his statement had made no impression. Below to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 709.

‡ Jagow to Below, telegram, "urgent," "secret," 2 August; G 648.

§ Recouly, pp. 135–140.

> The attack upon her independence with which the German Government threatens [Belgium] constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. No strategic interest justifies such a violation of law.
>
> The Belgian Government, if they were to accept the proposals submitted to them, would sacrifice the honor of the nation and betray their duty toward Europe.
>
> Conscious of the part which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilization of the world, they refuse to believe that the independence of Belgium can be preserved only at the price of the violation of her neutrality.
>
> If this hope is disappointed, the Belgian Government are firmly resolved to repel, by all the means in their power, every attack upon their rights.*

This defiance of a Great Power by a small state will not soon be forgotten.†

The two famous documents were at once communicated to the French minister and to the press. M. Davignon informed the foreign governments.‡ King Albert, in a telegram to King

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* Davignon to Below, 3 August; Belgian I 22, G 779.

† The German Government was at first not disposed to take the reply seriously. Moltke, "counting on the possibility of being able to come to an understanding when the Belgian Government realizes the seriousness of the situation," demanded that the Belgian Government, which had rejected "our well-intentioned proposals," be informed at 6 A. M., on 4 August, that Germany would resort to arms. Moltke to foreign office, 3 August; G 788. He also prevented the issuance of an article prepared for the press by the foreign office (G 781) justifying the German action. The desired declaration was sent. Jagow to Below, telegram, "urgent," 3 August; G 791. On 9 August, after the fall of Liège, the German Government, through the mediation of the American minister at The Hague and the Netherlands Government, invited Belgium to suspend any further resistance to German arms. Fallon to Davignon, telegram, 9 August; Belgian I 60. The Belgian Government answered that the German proposal "repeats the proposal which was formulated in the ultimatum of 2 August" and that "faithful to her international obligations, Belgium can only reiterate her reply to that ultimatum." Davignon to Fallon, telegram, 12 August; Belgian I 71. The delay was occasioned by the desire of the Belgian Government to obtain the approval of Great Britain and France.

‡ Circular telegram of Davignon, 3 August; Belgian I 23, B 515.

George of Great Britain, made "a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of Your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium."* But the Belgian Government was unwilling to compromise its position until the national territory was actually violated. It declined with thanks an unofficial offer made by the French minister of five French army corps, stating that it was "making no appeal at present to the guarantee of the Powers" and "would decide later what ought to be done."† Indeed its intention was to make no appeal "so long as Belgian soil is not violated by formidable bodies of German troops."‡

But the next morning the situation was changed. The German minister appeared at six o'clock to state that

> the German Government finds itself, to its deep regret, compelled to take—by force of arms if necessary—those measures of defense already foreshadowed as indispensable, in view of the menace of France.§

Shortly afterward, the Belgian frontier was violated at Gemmenich by the troops marching on Liège.|| The parliament met at 11 A. M. The King made a patriotic speech calling for the "stubborn resistance" of all classes and parties. The prime minister read the correspondence with the German Government, on which, he said, "no comment was required." Great indignation was manifested, and the decision of the Government to resist invasion was approved with enthusiasm.¶ At 4 P. M., the German minister received his passports.** In the

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* Albert to George V, telegram, 3 August; Belgian I 25.

† Circular of Davignon, 3 August; Belgian I 24. Villiers to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 551.

‡ Villiers to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 562.

§ Below to Davignon, 4 August; Belgian I 27. This was at once notified to London (B 581), for the Belgian minister had reported Grey as saying that "if our neutrality is violated it means war with Germany." Lalaing to Davignon, telegram, 3 August; Belgian I 26.

|| Davignon to Lalaing and Guillaume, telegrams, 4 August; Belgian I 30.

¶ Villiers to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 603. Count J. de Lichtervelde, *Heures d'histoire: le 4 août 1914 au parlement belge* (Brussels, 1918).

** Davignon to Below, 4 August; Belgian I 31. That morning Jagow had instructed his minister to "continue to maintain the position that Germany is ready course of the day the Belgian Government formally appealed to Great Britain, France and Russia "to co-operate as guaranteeing Powers in the defense of her territory," and proposed "concerted and joint action . . . to guarantee the future maintenance of the independence and integrity of Belgium." Belgium, it stated, "is happy to be able to declare that she will undertake the defense of her fortified places."*

Yet one other incident of this stirring episode remains to be told. On 1 August the King of the Belgians addressed a personal appeal to the German Emperor to repeat the declarations of the German Government that Belgian neutrality would be respected.† William II replied telegraphically in a tone of studied insolence that the overture of his government was made "with the friendliest intentions toward Belgium":

> It is still in the power of Your Majesty to shape the relations between us in the friendly manner offered and under the conditions as communicated. My sentiments toward Your Majesty and Your Majesty's country remain unaltered.‡

Of all the documents of the crisis of July, 1914, this is surely the most despicable, just as the reply of King Albert is the most dignified and the most moving:

> The feelings of friendship which I have expressed to Your Majesty and those of which you have so often assured me, the most cordial relations between our two governments, the in-

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at any time to hold out the hand of a brother to Belgium and to negotiate for an acceptable *modus vivendi.*" Jagow to Below, telegram, "urgent," 3 August, 9.20 A. M.; G 805. There is no indication that Below was able to present these observations to the Belgian Government.

* Davignon to British, French and Russian ministers in Brussels, 4 August; Belgian I 40. Villiers to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 654.

† Albert to William II, 1 August; G 765. Much later the German Emperor told Daisy Princess of Pless that "the King of the Belgians refused to remain neutral; that he himself personally talked on the telephone to King Albert before the war broke out, saying that if Belgium would remain neutral Germany would not cross the Belgian frontier; the King of the Belgians refused." *Daisy Princess of Pless* (London, 1928), p. 395, entry of 30 January, 1916. It is, of course, possible that William II talked to King Albert on the telephone, but that he made any such offer as alleged is simply beyond belief.

‡ William II to Albert, telegram (written by Jagow), 3 August; G 783.

> variably correct attitude of Belgium against which Germany has never been able to formulate the least reproach, did not allow me to suppose for a single moment that Your Majesty would force us, in the face of Europe, to the cruel choice between war and dishonor, between respect for treaties and repudiation of our international obligations.*

The King's reproach was indeed admitted by the German Government. When the Belgian minister in Berlin asked the German foreign minister for a verbal explanation, Herr von Jagow repeated that "the passage through Belgium is for Germany a question of life and death," for she had to "forestall" France. Baron Beyens pointed out that France had promised to respect Belgian neutrality if Germany did, and asked if Germany thought that "we were cowards, incapable of defending our neutrality and unworthy of an independent existence." Herr von Jagow did not answer. Finally he admitted that "Germany has nothing with which to reproach Belgium, whose attitude has always been correct."† Herr Zimmermann, for his part, took refuge behind the helplessness of the foreign office:

> Since the order for mobilization had been issued by the Emperor, all power now belonged to the military authorities. It was they who considered the invasion of Belgium to be an indispensable operation of war.‡

The authoritative word was spoken by the chancellor. In his speech to the Reichstag on 4 August, he said:

> Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and perhaps have already entered Belgian territory.
>
> Gentlemen, that is a breach of international law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—the wrong we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained.

* Albert to William II, telegram, 4 August; G 837.

† Beyens to Davignon, 21 September; Belgian II 51.

‡ Beyens to Davignon, 22 September; Belgian II 52.

This leaves nothing to be said. It is an arguable thesis that Sir Edward Grey exploited the neutrality of Belgium as a means of persuading the British cabinet, the British parliament and the British people to accept his policy of intervention. It may be said that the French Government made good diplomatic use of the German violation of that neutrality.* But the conduct of Belgium herself was above reproach. She showed no favors to any of her neighbors, she held her head high and her course straight, and she fell an innocent victim to the quarrels of the Great Powers that surrounded her.

London and Berlin, 3–4 August

The telegrams of Prince Lichnowsky on Sunday, 2 August, had held out some hope that the neutrality of Great Britain might still be secured, at least on conditions.† It is therefore not surprising that during the next two days desperate efforts were made by the German Government to this end. Indeed, plans had been laid as early as 1 August. On that day the director of the press bureau in the Wilhelmstrasse sent to Albert Ballin the draft of an article asserting that the German Emperor "has worked tirelessly for the maintenance of peace" and that "Russia alone is forcing war on Europe, a war which no one but she desired," with instructions to get it published—obviously in England.‡ The shipping magnate telegraphed the text to Count Wengersky, the head of the Hamburg-American Line offices in London, who transmitted it to the manager of the *Times* requesting, in the name of Herr Ballin, that it be published in Monday's issue of that newspaper. The *Times,* it is hardly necessary to add, declined, and published instead a powerful leading article urging British intervention.*

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* "News has been received to-day that German troops have entered Luxemburg territory, thereby violating the neutrality of the Duchy. . . . This circumstance is considered very advantageous for France, as it will certainly call forth a protest from England and cause her to manifest greater energy. There is also news that German troops are said to be advancing toward Arlon, which indicates an intention of violating Belgian neutrality also. This will touch England even more nearly. Viviani telegraphed to London immediately directing the French ambassador to call Grey's attention to this." Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 2 August; Romberg, p. 48.

† See above, p. 358. Even after the mobilization of the navy, the prince thought that "the attitude will for the present be one of waiting." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 707.

‡ Hammann to Ballin, telegram, "urgent," 1 August; G 572.

Perhaps it was the expectation that the article would appear which caused Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg to denounce the conduct of Russia to the British Government and to justify the action of Germany as follows:

> The indignation of our public opinion at the Russian mobilization was so great that the refusal to demobilize had to be taken as a hostile act which justified a declaration of war, unless we were willing to sacrifice our national honor. Moreover the fact that Russian soldiers have fired on our troops along the frontier before our last declaration had been presented, proves that the so-called peaceful mobilization is a state of affairs which cannot be maintained.†

It is worth noting that the usual argument of military necessity was not advanced. This was followed, in the course of 3 August, by three separate denials that German troops had entered French territory;‡ while the British ambassador in Berlin was given a list of alleged French violations of the German frontier.§ Most important of all, the hint conveyed by Prince Lichnowsky on the previous day was taken up, and he was informed that

> we can state definitely that we shall not threaten the northern coasts of France so long as England remains neutral.||

These several communications were of course intended for

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* Steed, II, 17.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 2 August, sent 3 August, 12.55 A. M.; G 696. Communicated to British foreign office; B 539, 2.

‡ Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegrams, 3 August; G 713, 725, 742. Communicated to foreign office; B 519, 531, 608.

§ Goschen to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 553. A somewhat different list had already been sent to London. Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 2 August; G 693. Communicated to British foreign office; B 539, 1.

|| Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 3 August; G 714. The initiative may have come from Tirpitz, who argued that "even if England declares war later, mobilization of the navy and the economic mobilization will gain by delay." Tirpitz to William II, 3 August; G 715.

the British Government. In addition, the counsellor of the German embassy, Herr von Kühlmann, who returned to London on the evening of 2 August, issued a remarkable statement which was reproduced in the afternoon papers and was obviously intended to influence the opinion of Parliament. It ran thus:

> The maintenance of British neutrality would in no way injure France. On the contrary it might be argued that by remaining neutral, Great Britain could give France exactly as much strategic assistance, and a good deal more effective diplomatic help. As, according to all reliable information, there is no intention of sending British troops to the Continent, and as a few British divisions, considering the enormous numbers engaged, could hardly alter the balance of power, all England can do for France is to protect her North-Sea coast from invasion, and to prevent the neutral ports of Belgium and Holland from being used as bases of armed aggression against France.
>
> Germany would be disposed to give an undertaking that she will not attack France by sea in the North or make any warlike use of the sea coast of Belgium or Holland, if it appeared that Great Britain would make this undertaking a condition of her neutrality for the time being.
>
> Thus England by not going to war herself could render to France the maximum of assistance she could give without going to war. That England as a neutral Power, maintaining an armed neutrality, would diplomatically be a greater asset for France for the terminations of hostilities at an early moment than if herself involved in war is self-evident.*

The argument was undoubtedly clever, well calculated to appeal to Liberals to whom the very thought of war was abhorrent and who were unwilling to interrupt the work of social reform being carried through by the party.

Before the British Cabinet met on the morning of 3 August, the prime minister was called upon by the leaders of the opposition, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Bonar Law. "They were in general agreement, but laid great stress upon Belgian neutrality."* The fact that Germany had presented an ultimatum in Brussels was already known.† When the cabinet met, the prime minister announced that in addition to Mr. Burns, Lord Morley, Sir John Simon, and Lord Beauchamp had resigned; but he made clear that "nothing would induce him to separate from Grey."‡ So the cabinet resolved to make the violation of Belgian neutrality a *casus belli*. The resigning ministers, however, were persuaded "to say nothing to-day and to sit in their accustomed places in the House."§ It only remained for Sir Edward Grey to explain the policy of the government to Parliament and to secure its approval, for assurances had been repeatedly given that the decision of war or peace would be left to Parliament.

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* *Westminster Gazette,* 3 August.

Before going to the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey received Prince Lichnowsky at the foreign office—for the last time. The ambassador asked what the decision was, only to be refused an answer: Parliament must be the first to hear. He then pleaded with the British minister "not to make the neutrality of Belgium a condition *sine qua non*, as this would lead to disastrous consequences." Expressing the opinion that the German general staff intended at most only to march across the southeastern corner of Belgium, he pledged himself

> 1. That even in the event of an armed conflict with Belgium, we would maintain the integrity of Belgian territory;
> 2. That in case England remained neutral, we would not approach the Channel or the northern coast of France with our fleet.

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* Oxford and Asquith, II, 24.

† Special telegram of the Exchange Telegraph Company; B 514. Villiers to Grey, telegram, 3 August, received 10.55 A. M.; B 521. No particulars were given, except that Belgium had been asked to observe benevolent neutrality.

‡ Morley, p. 27. Before the meeting, Morley saw Lloyd George and said that he had resigned. "He seemed astonished. '*But if you go, it will put us who don't go, in a great hole.*' I made the obvious reply to this singular remark. He asked if I had considered the news of Germany bullying Belgium, etc. 'Yes,' said I, 'and it is bad enough, but, in my view, war is not the only reply, and it does not alter my aversion to the French entente policy and its extended application.' He told me that it changed Runciman's line and his own." *Ibid.*, p. 23. The effect of the German violation of Belgium on the other members of the cabinet is stated by Beaverbrook, p. 29, and Fitzroy, II, 560.

§ Oxford and Asquith, II, 24.

Sir Edward Grey refused to give any assurances: what Prince Lichnowsky offered was "far too narrow an engagement." Nevertheless, the ambassador did not quite give up hope. "I repeat," he reported to Berlin, "that they would like to remain neutral, and are counting on our support."*

Sir Edward Grey's speech to the House of Commons was a masterly performance, for there can be little doubt that he persuaded a reluctant assembly to sanction his policy. He spoke from the point of view, not of responsibility for the situation, but of "British interests, British honour, and British obligations." Dealing first with the last point, he revealed that since 1906 conversations had taken place between French and British military and naval experts and that in 1912 notes had been exchanged between himself and the French ambassador which provided for discussion in time of crisis and the possibility of action in common; these notes he read to the House.† At the same time, he made clear that no formal obligation to assist France had been assumed.

He then explained what he thought "the situation requires of us." Personally he was of the opinion that British honor and British interests alike required Great Britain to protect the northern coast of France against a German attack, and he read out the conditional promise which he had given to the French ambassador on the previous day. He understood, he said, that

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* Grey, II, 13, American edition, II, 13. Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 764.

† See above, I, 49. In the reading to the House of Commons, Grey omitted the last sentence: "If these measures involved action, the plans of the General Staffs would at once be taken into consideration, and the Governments would then decide what effect should be given to them." The full text was published in the *White Paper* three days later, but the fact that this sentence was omitted was not discovered until some time later. Grey writes: "It was not until 1923, nine years later, that a charge of having omitted the last sentence of that letter was brought to my notice. My first impulse was to deny the thing as impossible; but it is so: the last sentence of the letter does not appear in the report of the speech." The report shows that a question was asked at this point. "It may be that the interruption in the reading of the letter, so near the end, caused an accidental omission, or perhaps I thought the last sentence unimportant, as it did not affect the sense and main purport of what had already been read out. I cannot say." Grey, II, 16, American edition, II, 16–17. His argument that the last sentence did not affect the general sense of the letter is sound enough, for there would have been no point in discussing measures which might be taken in common unless it was understood that a decision would be taken whether to give effect to the measures.

> the German Government would be prepared, if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality, to agree that its fleet would not attack the northern coast of France.

That, he argued, "is far too narrow an engagement for us," because it did not involve respect for the neutrality of Belgium.*

The Belgian question he expounded on the twofold assumption, taken from the speeches of Gladstone in 1870, that Great Britain was under obligation to defend the neutrality of the little state and that "we have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that which we may have in the literal operation of the guarantee." The House was asked to consider what might be at stake:

> If France is beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a Great Power, becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself . . . if that were to happen, and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland, and then Denmark, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that just opposite to us there would be a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power? . . . If, in a crisis like this, we run away from those obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost.

Germany had presented an ultimatum to Belgium. Therefore, "we must be prepared . . . to defend ourselves and to take our part." He had, he said, "put the vital facts before the House," and he asked for its approval.†

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* "The promise to defend these coasts was given. The German Government was informed. They promised not to attack these coasts (of course on the understanding that we remained neutral), and this naval point ceased to have any direct influence on the decision of the British Government. But the Belgian point had become paramount, and the naval point was no longer the decisive one." Grey, II, 3; American edition, II, 3.

† A distinguished Liberal journalist and friend of Sir Edward Grey has written: "We had, I think, abundant justification on any code of ethics whatever for taking up arms against Germany when she invaded Belgium. . . . Also we felt that the victory of Germany would be the end of Liberal and democratic institutions. It is nevertheless true—and perhaps the most important part of the truth about the old Europe—that if Germany had been incontestably right and her conduct in the war

That approval was enthusiastically given. As the speech progressed, cheers were heard, and although some Radicals and the leader of the Labour party protested, the bulk of the Liberals and the Unionists *en masse* provided an overwhelming majority, or would have done so, for no formal vote was taken. Before the adjournment the news was received that Belgium had refused the German proposal and would repel the German aggression. "Now," said Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Churchill, "we shall send them an ultimatum to stop the invasion of Belgium within twenty-four hours."* At 5 P. M. the Dover and cross-Channel flotillas were ordered to take up their positions the next morning.†

As a final step in the day's events, the prime minister persuaded Sir John Simon and Lord Beauchamp not to resign. Only Lord Morley and Mr. Burns remained adamant and left the cabinet.

The French ambassador was jubilant. He telegraphed to Paris:

> The House will this evening vote the credit which is asked for; from this moment its support is secured to the policy of the government, and it follows public opinion which is declaring itself more and more in our favor.‡

His German colleague tried to keep up courage. He thought Sir Edward Grey's speech "satisfactory," at least to the extent that "England is not immediately ranging herself with her Entente associates," and he interpreted the references to Belgium to mean that "England would absolutely oppose any diminution of the territory or sovereignty of Belgium"; if, he argued,

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irreproachable, the reasons compelling this country to take sides against her would have been just as strong, and its position just as perilous, if it had failed to do so, as on the contrary assumption. Whatever the issue on which she fought, a victorious Germany in possession of Belgium and the Channel ports and commanding all the fleets of Europe might have been a deadly menace to the British Empire, and, according to the accepted principles of power-politics she would be entitled to assert her supremacy over it in any way she chose." Spender, *Life, Journalism and Politics*, II, 178–179.

* Churchill, p. 217, American edition, p. 235.

† Corbett, I, 31.

‡ P. Cambon to Viviani, telegram, 3 August; F 145.

the speech revealed "a deep distrust of our political intentions," it nevertheless showed that the British Government "has no immediate intention of entering the conflict or abandoning its previous neutral stand."* But when he had read the full text of the speech next morning, the scales fell from his eyes. "I do not believe," he said, "that we can count much longer on England's neutrality." And he left no doubt in the mind of his government of the reason:

> The news that reached here yesterday about the invasion of Belgium by German troops brought about a complete reversal of public opinion, to our disadvantage. The appeal of the King of the Belgians, made in moving language, has materially strengthened this impression.†

All available evidence confirms this verdict. Sir Edward Grey might have secured the consent of Parliament to the undertaking to protect the northern coasts of France against German attack. But without the Belgian issue, he would not have had behind him an enthusiastic House of Commons or a united country. The neutrality of Belgium was not the only reason, perhaps not the principal reason, why the British foreign secretary advocated the intervention of Great Britain, but it was the reason which persuaded public opinion of the necessity and justice of that course. Equally clear is it that neither the German Government‡ nor the German general staff§ was prepared to purchase the neutrality of Great Britain by respecting the neutrality of Belgium. Just as France could have avoided the war only by abandoning her alliance with Russia, so Great Britain could escape it only by denying at once her obligation, her honor and her interest.

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* Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 801.

† Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 820. The naval attaché was of the same opinion. But since "every day that England remains neutral is a day gained," he advised that "every provocation in the shape of activity by our fleet against England should be avoided as far as possible." Lichnowsky to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 819.

‡ "Please state to Sir Edward Grey that if we proceed to violate the neutrality of Belgium, we are driven to it by the duty of self-preservation. We found ourselves in a position of military constraint. . . . It is not in the least an intentional violation of international law, but the act of a man fighting for his life." Bethmann-Hollweg to Lichnowsky, telegram, 3 August; G 790.

§ Moltke "had strongly advised against purchasing the neutrality of England at the expense of sparing the territory of Belgium, even if this had been possible, which he did not believe." Lerchenfeld to Hertling, 5 August; Dirr, p. 188.

THE BRITISH DECLARATION OF WAR, 4 AUGUST

Although the decision of the British Government was made on the afternoon of 3 August, no action to give effect to it was taken until the next morning. The reasons for the delay are not known. At 9.30 A. M. on 4 August Sir Edward Grey sent a stiff note to Berlin. After stating that Belgium had appealed for British diplomatic intervention against the demand of Germany for a free passage through Belgian territory, he said:

> His Majesty's Government are bound to protest against this violation of a treaty to which Germany is a party in common with themselves, and must request an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with, and that her neutrality will be respected by Germany.

Sir Edward Goschen was instructed to "ask for an immediate reply."* In preparation for the rupture, the Belgian Government was informed that

> if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and that His Majesty's Government will support them in offering such resistance, and that His Majesty's Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering . . . at once common action for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.†

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 4 August; B 573, a. In a supplementary telegram (B 573, b) the ambassador was told that he "need make no paraphrase" of the protest, which shows that it was regarded as practically the final act.

† Grey to Villiers, telegram, 4 August; B 580. A similar communication was made to the Netherlands and Norwegian Governments. The French and Russian Governments were asked to make the same declaration. Grey to Bertie and Buchanan, telegrams, 4 August; B 578. Later in the day the proposal was cancelled. Grey to representatives, telegram, 4 August; B 593. The Belgian Government informed the British minister as a "matter of historical interest" that they would have accepted the offer with "lively satisfaction." Villiers to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 631.

No real hope can have been entertained that Germany would yield. But by way of emphasizing the lawless conduct of the German Government a new protest was sent to Berlin against the "totally unjustifiable" detention of British merchant ships, which was said to be continuing in spite of assurances that had been given.* Events, however, were moving too rapidly for such minor matters. The news was received that Germany had informed Belgium of her intention "to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable in view of the French menaces,"† and that the Belgian frontier had been violated.‡ "This simplifies matters," said the prime minister.§

Almost immediately afterward the German ambassador presented a final appeal from his government. Herr von Jagow wished to "dispel any mistrust . . . by repeating most positively [the] formal assurance that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, German will, under no pretense whatever, annex Belgian territory":

> Sincerity of this declaration is borne out by fact that we solemnly pledged our word to Holland strictly to respect her neutrality. It is obvious that we could not profitably annex Belgian territory without making territorial acquisitions at the expense of Holland.||

"We cannot," said Mr. Asquith in Parliament, "regard this as in any sense a satisfactory communication." Of what value was the promise of a government which had broken a much

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 4 August, 11.30 A. M.; B 585.

† Villiers to Grey, telegram, 4 August, received 11.20 A. M.; B 584.

‡ Davignon to Lalaing, telegram, 4 August; Belgian I 39.

§ Oxford and Asquith, II, 25.

|| Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, in English and *en clair*, 4 August; G 810. Communicated to foreign office at noon; B 587. The telegram was sent at the demand of Moltke—as were other telegrams on these days. Moltke to foreign office, 4 August; G 804. It is to be noted that the original summons to Belgium (G 376; see above, p. 152) made the guarantee to Belgium dependent upon Belgium's offering no resistance to the German armies, and that the communication to London was preceded by a new offer to Belgium of a *modus vivendi*, provided Liège was opened to German troops and the destruction of railways ceased (Jagow to Below-Saleske, telegram, "urgent," 4 August; G 805).

more solemn obligation, quite apart from the legal and political aspects of the matter?

The British ultimatum was now despatched:

> We hear that Germany has addressed note to Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that German Government will be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable.
>
> We are also informed that Belgian territory has been violated at Gemmenich.
>
> In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that Germany declined to give the same assurance respecting Belgium as France gave last week in reply to our request made simultaneously at Berlin and Paris, we must repeat that request, and ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram of this morning be received here by 12 o'clock to-night.

If not, Sir Edward Goschen was to ask for his passports and to say that

> His Majesty's Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a Treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.*

That a favorable reply was not expected is clear, for the mobilization of the British army was ordered at 4 P. M.†

Nevertheless the British Government respected the amenities of international relations. The German cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* lay off the Italian port of Otranto, within the range of the British Mediterranean squadron, even though the British ships had been ordered not to come within six miles of the Italian coast.‡ The naval officers at the admiralty wished to sink the German ships, for they regarded war as inevitable. But Mr. Churchill, though he sympathized with the idea, refused to give the order, which had in fact been forbidden by the cabinet.§

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* Grey to Goschen, telegram, 4 August, 2 P. M.; B 594.

† Edmonds, I, 28.

‡ Admiralty to foreign office, 4 August; B 597.

§ Churchill, pp. 221–227, American edition, pp. 236–243.

The action of the government was communicated to the House of Commons by Mr. Asquith. It was greeted with cheers, and the House dispersed. As the evening wore on, the cabinet assembled at the residence of the prime minister. Crowds collected before Buckingham Palace. It was necessary to wait until midnight.

In Berlin the British intervention was considered to be only a question of time. The naval staff had expected it since Sunday,* the foreign office since Monday.† Nevertheless the chancellor in his speech to the Reichstag repeated publicly the assurances given privately that

> as long as Great Britain remains neutral, our fleet will not attack the northern coast of France, and we will not violate the territorial integrity and independence of Belgium . . . and we would also be willing, upon reciprocity being assured, to take no warlike measures against French commercial shipping.

This section of his speech, together with his remarks about Belgium, was even telegraphed to Prince Lichnowsky in an uncoded telegram in English‡ with the obvious hope that it would be intercepted and perhaps published in the British press. The persistence of the German Government was as remarkable as its political acumen was defective.

It was not until after the session of the Reichstag that the British ambassador was able to present the protest of his government against the violation of Belgium. Herr von Jagow said at once that "in consequence of the German troops having crossed the frontier that morning, Belgian neutrality had already been violated." And instead of adducing the story presented in Brussels about a French advance on Namur and Givet, he gave a true statement: "they had to advance into

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* Naval staff to naval commanders, telegram, 2 August; G 655. Nevertheless, at 8.50 P. M., on 3 August, the fleet was ordered to "avoid all movements or actions which might be interpreted by England as directed against herself." Naval staff to Jagow, 4 August; G 808.

† Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, "secret," 3 August; G 751.

‡ Jagow to Lichnowsky, telegram, 4 August; G 829. Communicated to the British foreign office by the censor; B 612.

France by the quickest and easiest way," and "it was now impossible for them to draw back." When a few hours later, at 7 P. M., Sir Edward Goschen returned to present the British ultimatum, the German foreign minister replied that "if the time given were even twenty-four hours or more his answer must be the same," and the ambassador asked for his passports.*

The ambassador then paid a final visit to the chancellor. Their conversation was perhaps the most famous incident of the entire crisis. According to Sir Edward Goschen, Herr von Bethmann "at once began a harangue which lasted for about 20 minutes":

> The step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree, just for a word "neutrality," a word which in war time has so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been rendered useless by this last terrible step. . . . What he had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen!†

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* The British note (cf. G 863) did not contain a specific declaration of war, and Jagow had to inquire if it signified only a rupture of diplomatic relations or war. Tirpitz, II, 27. The declaration sent to Lichnowsky read as follows: "The result of the communication made at Berlin having been that His Majesty's ambassador has had to ask for his passports, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that in accordance with the terms of the notification made to the German Government to-day His Majesty's Government consider that a state of war exists between the two countries as from to-day at 11 o'clock P. M." Grey to Lichnowsky, 4 August; B 643. There is an interesting story to the effect that during the evening the news circulated in the foreign office that Germany had declared war on Great Britain and that an official was sent to present Lichnowsky with his passports. The emissary returned to report that "Prince Lichnowsky, whom it had apparently been necessary to arouse from a premature slumber, had declined to take delivery of his passports on the ground that he had no information that his country had declared war on us." J. D. Gregory, *On the Edge of Diplomacy* (London, 1929), p. 69.

† During the war and after, Bethmann sought to explain away his language. "When Sir Edward Goschen repeatedly insisted on Belgian neutrality as the decisive issue, I impatiently exclaimed that when compared with the fearful consequences of an Anglo-German war the treaty of neutrality was only a 'scrap of paper.' The phrase must have been a slip. My blood was boiling at the repeated and hypocritical insistence on Belgian neutrality, which was not what had really caused England to enter the war, and at the complete lack of understanding that the British declaration of war must destroy world-values, compared with which the breach of

Sir Edward Goschen protested strongly:

> I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of "life and death" for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked.

When the German asked if the British Government had thought of the price, the Englishman replied that "fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements." In his indignation* the German chancellor did the cause of his country an incalculable injury, for the "scrap of paper" was a winged phrase which captured the imagination of the world.†

The excitement produced in the German capital by the British declaration of war was intense, all the more so because both in the chancellor's speech and in the *White Book* issued by the foreign office the impression was created that British diplomacy had throughout the crisis worked in harmony with Germany. Late in the evening a wild demonstration took place before the British embassy, which was badly damaged by the missiles thrown from the street, and it was with considerable difficulty that a telephone message was got through to the foreign office. After the uproar had been suppressed, Herr von Jagow called to apologize and to say that "There are three very unhappy men in Germany to-day—the Kaiser, the Chancellor, and myself."‡ On the following morning William II divested himself of his dignities as British field-marshal and British admiral. On 6 August the ambassador and his staff left Berlin and travelled to Holland without serious incident.

The telegram in which Sir Edward Goschen announced the

Belgian neutrality was a trifling matter." Bethmann-Hollweg, I, 180. The '*welt-fremd*' chancellor never really appreciated the significance of the German action.

* "I did not know I could speak English so fluently; I spoke right out," he remarked shortly afterward. O. Hammann, *Bilder aus der letzten Kaiserzeit* (Berlin, 1922), p. 76.

† Goschen to Grey, 6 August; B 671.

‡ F. Rattigan, *Diversions of a Diplomat* (London, 1924), pp. 136–139.

rupture* was never received in London. When midnight came without an answer, the assembled crowds sang "God Save the King!" The admiralty gave the war signal to the fleets, and Mr. Churchill looked forward eagerly to the destruction of the *Goeben* early the next morning. But the German embassy was not molested. Its occupant, even though Sir Edward Grey told him privately that "we don't want to crush Germany,"† seemed like "a crazy man" to his American colleague.

> I feared he might literally go mad [wrote Mr. Page]. He is of the anti-war party, and he had done his best and utterly failed. This interview was one of the most pathetic experiences of my life. The poor man had not slept for several nights.‡

"My Emperor has hoodwinked me, and I have misled the English," was Prince Lichnowsky's own verdict.§ A special train took him to Harwich, where a guard of honor was mounted. "I was," he recorded later, "treated like a departing sovereign."||

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* Goschen to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 667.

† Lichnowsky, I, 133. Lichnowsky's memorandum of his conversation with Grey, on 5 August, is printed in *Die Auswärtige Politik des Deutschen Reiches 1871–1914* (Berlin, 1928, a condensation of *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*), IV, 850–852. Grey said that "the decision which he had had to make had been the hardest of his life. In doing so the consideration had been overwhelming that the injury which England would suffer by taking part in the war would not be much greater than if she remained passive, and as a participating Power England would be in a better position to cast her word into the scales than if she remained neutral, because she could at any time threaten to withdraw from the conflict. The violation of recognized treaties which were guaranteed by England had made it impossible for her any longer to stand aside; likewise he had not considered it practicable to enter into a bargain with us, as proposed by the imperial chancellor, which should define the conditions of British neutrality. He would not have considered such an agreement honorable from the British point of view, and it would have been impossible for him to make a treaty with a Power which had broken with a light heart the engagements it had entered upon. . . . If events did not take the course which our military party seemed to anticipate, or should we, as he earnestly desired, in not too distant a time for other reasons wish to end the struggle which was so dangerous for all Europe, he would always be ready, if he were still in office, to undertake mediation and to be of assistance to us. Any intention of crushing Germany lay far from him; all he desired was to restore peace as soon as possible under acceptable conditions and to put limits if possible to the unspeakable misfortune which affected the entire civilized world." William II's comment was, "Slippery as an eel, hypocritical liar!"

‡ B. J. Hendrick, *Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (New York, 1922), I, 306.

§ Fitzroy, II, 564.

|| Lichnowsky, I, 134.

"The lamps are going out all over Europe," said Sir Edward Grey to a friend on the afternoon of 3 August.* "I feel like a man who has wasted his life," he remarked to Walter Hines Page when telling him of the ultimatum to Belgium.† But his failure to preserve the peace of Europe was only in a limited sense personal; he was the victim of circumstances. In the light of all that is now known, it is perhaps a fair criticism of his conduct that he did not indicate early in the crisis the probable position of the British Government in the event of war. At least it is possible that a clear-cut declaration of solidarity with France and Russia would have induced the German Government to modify its course and to restrain its ally. But such a declaration would have had to be given very early indeed, probably before the Austro-Serbian rupture, certainly in time to forestall the declaration of war against Serbia; and quite conceivably it might have had the opposite effect from that desired, of rousing the German Government to instant action. In any case, Sir Edward Grey could not commit himself: neither cabinet, parliament nor country would have sanctioned his step. If uncertainty as to British policy contributed to the final disaster, the fault was not Grey's, but that of the political system under which he worked.

* Grey, II, 20; American edition, II, 20.

† Hendrick, I, 315. He expounded to Page the reasons for the ultimatum. "It was, in the first place, a matter of fulfilling a treaty obligation. . . . The principle of the sanctity of treaty rights was really the test of the progress of civilisation, as compared with a state of force and lawlessness; it was the foundation of all confidence between nations . . . the issue for us was that, if Germany won, she would dominate France; the independence of Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and perhaps of Norway and Sweden, would be a mere shadow: their separate existence as nations would really be a fiction; all their harbours would be at Germany's disposal; she would dominate the whole of Western Europe, and this would make our position quite impossible. We could not exist as a first-class State under such circumstances." Grey to Barclay, 4 August, B 638.

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

THE NEUTRALITY OF ITALY

ON 31 July, under great pressure from Berlin, Count Berchtold had accepted the Italian contention that Austria-Hungary must make compensation to Italy, according to Article VII of the Triple Alliance, for her action against Serbia.* Germany had in turn made a strong appeal to the Cabinet of Rome to fulfil its obligations. But the action of the Central Powers came too late. On the same day the Italian cabinet came once more to the conclusion that Austria's procedure constituted an "act of aggression," that the *casus foederis* did not apply, and that Italy must remain neutral, a decision which was communicated at once to the German and Austro-Hungarian ambassadors,† and announced the following day in the press.‡ Both Herr von Flotow and Herr von Mérey were of the opinion that fear of what Great Britain might do had weighed heavily with the Italian statesmen. At the same time they agreed that uncertainty about the question of compensation had been a factor, and they held out hope that "the last word has not been spoken."§

They were not long in being disillusioned. When the two ambassadors saw the Marquis di San Giuliano at 5 P. M. on 1 August to inform him of Count Berchtold's acceptance of the Italian interpretation of Article VII,* the minister declared that he had "received no news from Vienna," that on the contrary the last telegram from the Duke of Avarna represented Count Berchtold as not accepting that interpretation. Later Herr von Mérey was able to transmit his chief's telegram of acceptance, but only to be told that the conditions attached to it created an "unfavorable" impression. In fact, said the Italian foreign minister, the question of compensation was only "one element in the whole situation." He promised, however, to submit the question to the council of ministers that evening.†

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* See above, p. 221. On 1 August Conrad wrote to Cadorna, who had assumed the post of Italian chief of staff on 27 July, to inquire what forces Italy would place at the disposal of her allies and to request the despatch of a representative to Vienna for arranging the details. Conrad, IV, 158. On the previous day Cadorna had drawn up a memorandum in which he discussed quite objectively how Italy could best lend her assistance to the Central Powers, in case she decided to march with them; but he offered no opinion on the question whether she should take part in the war. As a soldier, he was content to abide by the policy of the government. L. Cadorna, *Altre pagine sulla grande guerra* (Milan, 1925), pp. 15–23.

† Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 31 August; G 534. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 88.

‡ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 568. Rodd to Grey, telegram, 1 August; E 430. Barrère to Viviani; F 124.

§ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 566. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 90.

The decision was what might have been expected: a formal resolution in favor of neutrality. The Austro-Hungarian acceptance, the Marquis di San Giuliano explained the next day, was not, because of the conditions attached to it, in conformity with Article VII, nor did it promise "a clear and precise agreement on the character and value of the compensation to be paid," which would evidently not be in proportion to the "dangers and sacrifices" to which Italy would be exposed. Such considerations, he affirmed, would not prevent Italy from doing her duty "if this duty existed," but the fact was that "the *casus foederis* is not applicable to the present war."‡ The hint that it might be possible "to arrive later at an agreement favorable to the allies"§ was cold comfort, if it did not, as Herr von Mérey averred, prove that the Italian policy was one of "blackmail."

Equally frigid was the reply of King Victor Emmanuel to the appeal of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The Austro-Hungarian monarch had telegraphed that "in agreement with Germany" he had decided "to defend the rights of the Triple Alliance," to which they "owed thirty years of peace and prosperity"; and, he concluded: "I am happy to be able at this solemn moment to count on the assistance of my allies and their valiant armies."* The King of Italy answered that he would observe a friendly and cordial attitude "in conformity with the treaty of the Triple Alliance";† upon which William II wrote: "Scoundrel! In spite of his written compact!"‡

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* The German ambassador had been instructed to communicate the news. Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 1 August; G 541.

† Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 614. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 2 August; A III 108.

‡ Mérey to Berchtold, telegrams, 2 August; A III 108, 109. Salandra, pp. 102–106.

§ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 675. On the same day San Giuliano told Rodd that "Italy would firmly abide by her decision, and he was unable to foresee now any combination of circumstances which would induce her to alter it." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 579.

The German Government then represented to Rome that "as the result of the attack of Russian troops on German territory we find ourselves in a state of war with Russia" and that "the war with Russia will unquestionably result in an attack upon us by France";§ in fact it announced various hostile acts on the part of the French.|| But the Italian foreign minister, though impressed by the report of the Russian attack, remarked that "it was probably a matter of minor frontier skirmishes,"¶ and the French violations of the German frontier he dismissed as "only the consequences of Austria's first aggressive act."** Similar arguments from the Austro-Hungarian Government met with a refusal to discuss the question.†† Nothing that Herr von Flotow or Herr von Mérey could say moved the Marquis di San Giuliano from his position.

Their last hope was the audience granted by the King to Lieutenant-Colonel von Kleist, the German Emperor's aide-de-camp, who had come on special mission. Victor Emmanuel assured the envoy that "personally he was whole-heartedly with us," but "unfortunately, he had only influence and no power."

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* Francis Joseph to Victor Emmanuel III, telegram, 1 August, 5 P.M.; A III 100, a.

† Victor Emmanuel III to Francis Joseph, telegram, 2 August; A III 100, b.

‡ Note on G 700.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Flotow, telegram, 2 August; G 628.

|| Jagow to Flotow, telegrams, 2 August; G 664, 690, 694.

¶ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 675.

** Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 745. San Giuliano told the British ambassador that the German contention was "absurd." "At such moments there would always be irregularities on frontier. It was perfectly clear on which side the provocation had been." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 579.

†† Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 2 August; Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 3 August; A III 106, 116.

> Should he dismiss the present ministry, no other one would assume responsibility. This was all chiefly because Austria had so far not been ready to make *any kind of definite* promise for the future, by which a reversal of public opinion might perhaps have been accomplished; whether this was now still possible, was very doubtful.

He promised to try once more to influence the government.* If he did, it was to no avail, for the formal proclamation of neutrality was issued in the course of the day.† The King thereupon telegraphed to the German Emperor:

> My government has made it plain to yours and to that of Austria-Hungary from the beginning that since it could not recognize in the present circumstances the *casus foederis* envisaged by the treaty of the Triple Alliance, it would direct all its diplomatic activity to the maintenance of the legitimate interests of our allies and ourselves and in behalf of peace.‡

His subscription, "Your brother and ally," moved William II to exclaim "Scoundrel! Impudence!"

Count Berchtold professed to the Duke of Avarna the greatest surprise that Italy did not seize "the opportunity to realize her far-reaching ambitions, such as Tunis, Savoy, etc.,"§ and reminded him of what the Marquis di San Giuliano had said, "Italy desires, Italy *needs a strong Austria-Hungary.*"|| But recognizing that the game was lost, he proposed to Berlin that they should pretend to be satisfied [*"faire bonne mine au mauvais jeu"*] and "avoid everything which might lead Italy to go

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* Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 771.

† Bollati to Jagow, 3 August; G 757. The ambassador excused himself for not presenting the declaration in person on the ground that he was ill, "suffering greatly." Bollati to Jagow, 3 August; G 756. The German Emperor commented: "I believe it; he doesn't want to be the bearer of such treachery."

‡ Victor Emmanuel III to William II, telegram, 3 August; G 755.

§ San Giuliano scorned such suggestions. "Nice is not only French, but had been ceded by Italy herself. Tunis is a fine colony, but Italy already has too many of them. Albanian territory might be added to a state nationally mixed like the Monarchy, but would be a burden for a state which comprised only one nationality." Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 4 August; A III 127.

|| Memorandum of Berchtold, 4 August; A III 134.

over to the camp of the enemy."* And since the Italian general staff was exhibiting nervousness about the Lovchen,† he gave an assurance to Rome that Austria-Hungary would not invade Montenegro and that even if the latter attacked the Monarchy, "our army will, out of regard for the Italian fears, refrain from occupying the Lovchen."‡

In Rome the King received Lieutenant-Colonel von Kleist again on 4 August, in order to say that "in spite of his numerous efforts of yesterday, the government stood by its decision for neutrality." The people, he explained, "will always confuse Germany with Austria," and even Signor Giolitti, "who was friendly to the Triple Alliance," was of the opinion that the *casus foederis* had not arisen.§ From the audience the German emissary derived a correct impression of the situation:

> Italy has been irritated by Austria and ascribes to her plans for aggrandisement in the Balkans which Austria has so far not renounced in a binding form. If this distrust on the part of Italy is strengthened by Austrian evasions, or if it is confirmed, Italy will consider that her interests are affected and will prepare herself not to allow it.‖

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* Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 3 August; A III 117. Jagow agreed. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 5 August; A III 137. Mérey had suggested the denunciation of the alliance. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 1 August; A III 90. Berchtold sought to defend himself against the reproaches of Berlin by arguing that the Italian Government had never made any positive proposals and that the formula which, under pressure from the German Government, he had finally sent to Rome, had been approved by Tschirschky and Avarna. Berchtold to Szögyény, 4 August; A III 126.

† Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 4 August; A III 128. Conrad, IV, 176.

‡ Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 4 August; A III 129. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 862. San Giuliano replied that "this would make things much easier for him," and promised to try to keep Montenegro neutral. Mérey to Berchtold, 5 August; A III 140.

§ Giolitti was in London when the crisis broke. When he learned of the German ultimatum to Russia, he started for Italy. In Paris, on 1 August, he told the Italian chargé that "Italy was not obliged by the Triple Alliance to enter the war, as Austria was attacking Serbia"; the chargé telegraphed Giolitti's views to Rome. Giolitti, *Memorie della mia vita*, II, 512–513. The ambassador in Paris, Tittoni, who was on a holiday in Norway, telegraphed on 26 July that the ultimatum to Serbia was "a provocation to war on the part of Austria-Hungary," and that the Triple Alliance was therefore not applicable "even if Russia took part in the war." T. Tittoni, *Le jugement de l'histoire sur la responsabilité de la guerre* (Paris, 1916), p. 10.

‖ Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 850. Berchtold protested vigorously against the accusation that he had refused to take a binding engagement in the matter of territorial acquisitions at the expense of Serbia and Montenegro, and

It is not surprising therefore that the German expectation that "benevolent neutrality will at least permit the importation of foodstuffs through Italy to the utmost extent"* was met by the placing of obstacles in the way of the grain traffic with Austria.† The Central Powers were defeated all along the line.‡

The position of Austria-Hungary was exceedingly difficult. The plans cherished for the future of Serbia ran counter to the interests of Italy and no one knew this better than Count Berchtold. If he admitted such plans, Italy's case for compensation was clear; but what Italy demanded as payment was too high a price—Trentino—for a Power which hoped to win the war. If he denied such plans, and he did deny them, he had no means of making the Italian Government believe his assurances. It was easy for Germany to advise her ally to be generous, but most certainly Germany would not have been willing to buy off France by the promise of Alsace-Lorraine. There is at least something to be said for Count Berchtold's view that it was "not merely a question of prestige":

> A voluntary sacrifice of territory inhabited by Italians would excite the other neighbors of the Monarchy, who would see in it a precedent to support their national ambitions and come forward with similar blackmailing demands.§

authorized Jagow to give the necessary assurances in Rome. Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 5 August; A III 148. But when he learned from Mérey that San Giuliano had spoken of the Trentino, he cancelled the authorization. Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 6 August; A III 150. Thus there was no chance for the German Emperor's view (comment on G 850) to be heard that "Vienna must in all circumstances make binding promises and offer large compensation which will be so tempting that it will work."

* Jagow to Flotow, telegram, 4 August; G 806. The telegram was sent at the request of Moltke. Moltke to foreign office, 4 August; G 804.

† Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 859. Shortage of grain in Italy was given as the reason.

‡ Avarna went to Rome to "do everything he can to restrain Italy at the last moment from what is, in his opinion, the shameful policy of neutrality, which will deprive the nation of its moral standing and must have a lasting effect on Italy's relations with the Central Powers in the future." Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 844. Mérey, suspecting that Avarna had been summoned by San Giuliano, thought it might be the signal for a rupture. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 5 August; A III 139. The Italian ambassador in Constantinople, the Marquis Garroni, also professed to disapprove of the official policy, and said that San Giuliano "can stand rough handling." Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, "secret," 3 August; G 815.

§ Berchtold to Mérey and Szögyény, telegrams, 5 August; A III 142. He was evidently thinking of Rumania.

His stubbornness was doubtless foolish, but no more foolish than the decision to begin a war against Serbia. Having, after years of hesitation, evolved a plan, the Austro-Hungarian Government was at least consistent in determining to see it through, cost what it might.

Various reasons for the attitude of Italy were put forward by her foreign minister. The official argument that Austria-Hungary, by not consulting Italy previously, had violated Article VII of the treaty, and by declaring war on Serbia was guilty of aggression, was legally correct, according to any reasonable reading of the Triple Alliance; and the German Government from the start accepted the Italian interpretation on the first point. On the other hand, the repeated hints of the Marquis di San Giuliano to the German ambassador that Count Berchtold should make a positive offer and his blunt statement to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador that "the Trentino was the only imaginable compensation"* leave the impression that if the Vienna statesmen could have brought themselves to make this sacrifice, the Italian Government would have been able to discover that the *casus foederis* had arisen.† The Cabinet of Vienna was probably badly served by its ambassador, who from the beginning of the crisis opposed any concessions to Italy.‡ Fear of revolution and the overthrow of the Monarchy may have contributed; at least San Giuliano repeatedly adduced this reason,§ and the Socialists, both the moderate and the extremist wings, did not conceal their opposition to war, an attitude which the British ambassador thought represented "the views of the majority."||

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* Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 4 August; A III 127.

† The information of the German minister in Bucharest, derived no doubt from his Italian colleague, was that "if Austria were to promise the Trentino and the line of the Izonso to Italy, Italy would rise as one man in defense of Austria." Waldthausen to foreign office; telegram, 4 August; G 833.

‡ Mérey to Berchtold, telegrams, 26, 28, 29, 31 July, 1 August; A II 50, 86, III 10, 61, 90.

§ Flotow to foreign office, telegrams, 2 and 3 August; G 675, 748. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 840.

|| Rodd to Grey, 30 July; B 650. The socialists of Milan held a meeting of protest against the war on 29 July. "The second speaker was the director of the *Avanti*, Professor Mussolini. He said that Austria was passing through a serious crisis and

Quite another picture was drawn for the benefit of the British Government. Sir Rennell Rodd was told that

> although there was no written understanding to the effect, it was clearly laid down by the Marquis di Rudini that in no case would Italy consent to place herself in open hostility to England.*

The Marquis di San Giuliano indeed said frankly that

> events had made it clear to him that Italy's views and interests happened most closely to coincide with those of England.†

It might well seem that Italy could not face the hostility of Great Britain:

> Italy has a very large part of her forces engaged in Libya, and inasmuch as these forces have still to be supplied almost entirely from Italy, the freedom of the sea between Sicily and Tripoli is absolutely necessary to prevent them from isolation and eventual destruction.‡

But perhaps this view must be discounted, for the Italian and Austro-Hungarian fleets together would have been superior to that of France, and Great Britain had few ships to spare for the Mediterranean.

If the several reasons offered for the neutral attitude of Italy are balanced against each other, the most intelligible explana-

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if the war were to last a long time, the Monarchy, which is in any case destined to collapse, would doubtless go to pieces. The speaker was not willing that the terms of the alliance between Italy and Austria-Hungary, which for the rest were not known to him, should be adhered to, for the Triple Alliance represented the alliance of reaction against freedom. Italy must work to localize the war, and in any case, remain neutral, for in the opposite case, the Socialist party would know how to immobilize the government by force." Geörgyey, from Milan, to Berchtold, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,066.

* Rodd to Grey, 4 August; B 669. The Italian Government actually appealed to London for advice whether it should issue a declaration of neutrality. Rodd to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 365. The reply was that "it has been our general practice to issue a proclamation of neutrality after the outbreak of a war in which we have decided to take no part." Grey to Rodd, telegram, 1 August; B 433.

† Rodd to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 579.

‡ Rodd to Grey, 2 August; B 664. San Giuliano used this very argument to the German ambassador. Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 614.

tion is the simplest. The Italian Government considered the extension of Austro-Hungarian influence in the Balkans as detrimental to its political interests and the action taken by the Cabinet of Vienna as a violation of the Triple Alliance. Whether it would have been willing to recognize the Austro-Hungarian pretensions in return for adequate compensation is a question that cannot be answered with certainty; but when such adequate compensation was not offered, the obvious course for Italy was to stigmatize the action of Austria-Hungary as an aggression and to declare her own neutrality: *"sacro egismo,"* as the Italian premier was later to call it.*

RUMANIA

No country was placed in a more delicate position by the prospect of war than Rumania. Lying between Austria-Hungary and Russia, it was likely, if it took sides with one belligerent, to be overrun by the armies of the other. Yet the temptation to participate in the struggle was great: on the north-eastern frontier lay the Russian province of Bessarabia, which had belonged to Moldavia before its annexation by Russia in 1812 and had a population of Rumanian majority; to the west was Transylvania, an Hungarian territory which contained a much larger Rumanian majority. That Rumania should take advantage of the situation to acquire one or the other of these *irredentas* seemed so natural that even before the war began, she was approached from both sides.† By the treaty of 1883 Rumania was bound to assist Austria-Hungary if the latter were attacked "in a portion of her states bordering on Rumania," that is, in Galicia.[*] But, as we have seen, public opinion in Rumania had been so alienated by the Hungarian policy in Transylvania that months before the murder of Sarajevo King Carol had made clear to Vienna and Berlin that Rumania would probably not go to war on the side of the Central Powers; it was this situation which had led Count Berchtold to propose taking Bulgaria into the Triple Alliance.[†] This suggestion, however, had been coldly received by the Rumanian Government, which was determined to maintain the Treaty of Bucharest intact;[‡] public sentiment, which at the time of the assassination of Francis Ferdinand had shown "profound and sincere sympathy and genuine consternation,"[§] underwent "a rapid and total change . . . practically within a few hours" when the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum was published,[‖] and King Carol himself said, "It means a world war."[¶] The King was irritated because Count Berchtold had not consulted him beforehand about the *démarche* in Belgrade, for he flattered himself that he could have prevented "serious complications";[**] and after the Serbian reply he thought Serbia had so "completely surrendered" that the "small differences" could be "peacefully compromised."[††]

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* Three classes of reservists were called up, in order to bring the cavalry and artillery to full war strength. The government had to be prepared for "any eventuality," so the King told Kleist. Flotow to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 850. A different explanation was given to Rodd: "Calling out certain Italian classes was only a measure of precaution, and more might yet be called, partly for an economic reason, as masses of Italian workmen were returning from France and Germany, who needed work, and they could take the place of men with the colours." Rodd to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 579. Mérey noted as an unfavorable omen the withdrawal of troops from Genoa and Naples. Mérey to Berchtold, telegram, 5 August; A III 139.

† See above, pp. 274, 315.

Not only that, but the Rumanian Government was profoundly suspicious of Bulgaria, which, it was feared, would take advantage of Serbia's predicament to seize Macedonia and create a 'Great Bulgaria'—which would upset the equilibrium of the Balkan peninsula.* As it was assumed that "in Sofia they will do what Vienna desires,"† the Austro-Hungarian Government was asked for assurances with respect to Bulgaria. But since Count Berchtold had ordered his minister to avoid conversations "concerning the territorial consequences of eventual warlike complications, as, for example, a diminution of Serbia,"‡ Count Czernin was reduced to saying that "we did not contemplate any annexation, an upsetting of the balance of strength in the Balkans did not correspond to the intentions of your Excellency [Berchtold], etc."—statements which, as he himself recognized, "did not allay the mistrust."§ It was not doubted that "we have allocated, perhaps have already even promised, a large piece of Serbia to Bulgaria," larger than any share which Rumania might receive.|| In such circumstances, the chances of Rumania aiding the Central Powers were exceedingly remote; in spite of the personal loyalty of King Carol, the attitude of the premier, M. Bratianu, was obviously opportunist.¶

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[*] Pribram, I, 30; English translation, II, 81.

[†] See above, I, 161–165.

[‡] See above, p. 162. Cf. Barclay to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 316.

[§] Czernin, *Im Weltkriege*, p. 114.

[‖] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

[¶] *Ibid.*, p. 116. The King thought that the Serbian Government, because of the internal political situation, could not possibly accept the ultimatum, and objected particularly to Point 1, which demanded a new press law contrary to the constitution. Czernin to Berchtold, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,592. But he telegraphed to Belgrade and St. Petersburg "urging that the ultimatum be accepted without fail"; Czernin, p. 119. Bratianu was requested by Sazonov to ask Vienna for an extension of the time limit. Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, 24 July; Schilling, p. 33. It was not until after the Austro-Serbian rupture that Bratianu was able to speak to Czernin on the matter. C. Diamandy, "Ma mission en Russie," I, in *Revue des deux mondes*, 7th period, IXL, 801 (15 February, 1929). Bratianu advised Serbia to yield and then appeal to the Powers to get the terms of the ultimatum moderated. Radev to Radoslavov, telegram, 26 July; *KSF*, VI, 242 (March, 1928). Cf. Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,664.

[**] Czernin to Berchtold, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,725.

[††] Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,795.

Nevertheless, Count Berchtold did not propose to give up without a struggle. He telegraphed to Bucharest:

> We have the firm conviction that Bulgaria will remain strictly neutral. There can be no talk of a Bulgarian attack on Rumania; furthermore, if any one whatsoever attacks Rumania, we shall not hesitate to declare immediately that we are Rumania's ally.**

And he followed this by a formal assurance and appeal:

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* Czernin to Berchtold, 24 July (attitude of the King); Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July (attitude of Bratianu); *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,592, 10,723. There were also some frontier incidents in the Dobrudja which made the Rumanian authorities nervous; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,087, 10,369, 10,424, 10,464, 10,761.

† Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,663.

‡ Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,482.

§ Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,796.

|| Czernin to Berchtold, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,798.

¶ Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July, and despatch, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,590, 10,665.

** Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,720.

> We ourselves contemplate no territorial conquests, and hope that, in case war should now come, it will remain localized. From the great wisdom of His Majesty the King and his loyalty to the alliance, we expect Rumania to observe strict neutrality. We ourselves, in accordance with our obligations, shall, in the further course of events, take no decisions touching the interests of Rumania without first getting in touch with our ally. Should Russia assume an aggressive attitude against us, we shall count on the loyal co-operation of Rumania as our ally.*

As soon as the declaration of war against Serbia was issued, the Emperor Francis Joseph telegraphed to King Carol that "Your friendship of many years as well as the confidential relationship which unites us is a guarantee to me that in this serious hour You will show a sincere appreciation of the decisions taken by me."† Count Berchtold, for his part, promised "to use all means in our power to keep Bulgaria strictly neutral"; and if Bulgaria did make an aggression against Rumania *"à la Danev"* [as against Serbia, in 1913], "we should leave Bulgaria to her sad fate."‡ This might seem sufficient; but since the German Government was supposed to possess greater influence in Rumania, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister asked Berlin to send its assurances to Bucharest that Bulgaria would remain neutral.§ He furthermore proposed an Austro-German *démarche* to force King Carol to declare publicly, either by representations in St. Petersburg or by the publication of the alliance, that "Rumania would fight on the side of the Triple Alliance against Russia."‖ The German Government agreed to both these steps, and sent the necessary instructions to its minister in Bucharest.¶

It was all to no avail. To the first overture, King Carol, while expressing his appreciation of the promise that Austria-

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* Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,721.
† Francis Joseph to Carol, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,873.
‡ Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,874.
§ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,785.
‖ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 28 July; A II 80.
¶ Jagow to Waldburg, telegrams, 28, 29 July; G 316, 389. See above, p. 164.

Hungary would take no decisions touching the interests of Rumania without consultation with her ally, replied, so Count Czernin reported, that "in case Russia were to move against us, we could, unfortunately, hardly count on the military support of Rumania": Russia would overthrow the Austrophile cabinet in Sofia and Rumania's army would have to watch the Bulgarian frontier.* The most he could promise was that Rumania would remain neutral in the war with Russia, and "that no power in the world could move him to take arms against the Monarchy."† He likewise refused to publish the treaty of alliance, alleging that public opinion was not ready for such a step. To the German chargé he gave the reason that "England would not remain indifferent in the event of our [Germany] attacking Russia."‡ Count Czernin he reminded of Rumania's treaty with Greece against Bulgaria;§ because of Bulgaria, Rumania could mobilize only one or two corps against Russia, "which, being separated from our army by 400 kilometres, would be decisively beaten"; moreover, the Russian fleet would destroy Constanza. When the Austro-Hungarian minister refused to accept this answer as "the last word," the King declared that "the decision did not depend on him alone, all the ministers and both leaders of the opposition must vote on it."||

The news from Rumania was "weighty" [*schwerwiegende*] for General Conrad,¶ who attached great importance to her

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* Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,876. Berchtold replied that the fear of the Radoslavov cabinet being overthrown "lacks any foundation." Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,952.

† Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,877.

‡ Waldburg to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 463. Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,045.

§ Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,046. He added the hope that "after the occupation of Belgrade, which we could hold as a pledge, we would agree to new negotiations," and said that he had advised Serbia "to accept every condition of the Monarchy immediately." He had already telegraphed to Francis Joseph: "May Providence watch over your precious health in this sad hour, may the war have a prompt and favorable conclusion and the peace of Europe be preserved. At the same time I cherish the wish that the equilibrium of the Balkan peninsula, won by my country by so many sacrifices, may remain undisturbed." Quoted in Schiessl to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July, *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,014.

|| Czernin to Berchold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,045.

¶ Conrad, IV, 145.

military co-operation.* But Count Tisza opposed any concessions:

> Everything we have won in prestige by our firm attitude toward Serbia will be lost if we let ourselves be intimidated by Rumania. We hold Rumania in check through Bulgaria, we have nothing to fear from her, and we can determine our future relationship to her on a satisfactory basis only by holding firm. We can give her a guarantee against a Bulgarian attack and declare that we shall take the Balkan equilibrium into account, but that the war provoked by Serbia has created an entirely new legal situation in which we must act according to the events of the war. If Rumania does not fulfil her obligation as an ally, we shall then be fully relieved of every engagement and can give our Balkan policy an orientation quite independent of Rumanian interests.†

Nor was the Rumanian decision for neutrality taken too tragically in Hungarian circles, if Baron Burián is to be believed:

> Our Rumanian "ally" [he wrote] has already made its position clear, and it is well so. In the event of a Russian war, it will *not* go with us, but also not against us. We could not expect more. . . . Also, it is worth much that we shall now be freed from our present quite one-sided engagements to Rumania and can in time establish a new, *sounder* relationship.‡

So Count Berchtold contented himself with urging the Bulgarian Government to give a declaration in Bucharest "in the most binding form" that it would observe strict neutrality toward Rumania if the latter participated in the war with Russia;§ while as an offset to Rumania, he endeavored to effect a *rapprochement* between Bulgaria and Turkey.||

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* Note of Conrad, 2 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 9995.

† Tisza to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; Tisza, I, 43–44.

‡ Burián to Tisza, 29 July; *ibid.*, I, 45.

§ Czernin to Tarnowski, telegram, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,006. The Bulgarian Government promised to make the declaration (Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,102), and Berchtold instructed Czernin to secure its immediate presentation (Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,137).

|| See below, pp. 443–444.

Germany, however, refused to admit defeat. The Emperor William appealed directly to King Carol,[*] and on 31 July the German Government offered the bait of Bessarabia.[†]

Russia's coquetting with Rumania began as early as 24 July, when the Rumanian minister in St. Petersburg, M. Diamandy, was invited to join in the consultation at the French embassy.[‡] Two days later, M. Sazonov made a formal inquiry in Bucharest, asking "what position Rumania proposes to take in case a conflict becomes unavoidable" and what her attitude would be if Bulgaria attempted to make use of the Austro-Serbian difficulty.[§] Next, he hinted that "we do not exclude the possibility of advantages for Rumania in case she should take part in a war against Austria on our side" and asked to be informed of the "plans" of the Rumanian Government.[||] Finally, if the Russian minister in Bucharest believed "a more concrete statement of those advantages" desirable, he was authorized to say that Russia "was ready to support the annexation of Transylvania to Rumania."[¶]

The Rumanian Government was thus being courted by both sides. It is possible that M. Bratianu hesitated about his course. He allowed the minister in Berlin to hint that Rumania would fulfil her obligations;[**] he refused to commit himself, saying to the French minister that "Rumania was bound by nothing,"[††] and on 31 July the French and Russian ministers, who had hitherto been "hopeful," were "now very anxious."[‡‡] But M. Bratianu's attitude was obviously dictated by the fact that King

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[*] William II to Carol, 31 July; G 471. See above, p. 273.

[†] Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 31 July; G 506. See above, p. 274.

[‡] See above, I, 496, 500.

[§] Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, "urgent," 26 July; R, 1925 29.

[||] Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, 29 July; R, 1925 82.

[¶] Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, 30 July; R, 1925 104.

[**] See above, p. 163.

[††] Poklevski to Sazonov, telegram, 31 July; M. Pokrovski, *Царская Россия в мировой войне* [Tsarist Russia in the World War] (Leningrad, 1926), German translation, *Das zaristische Russland im Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 1927), to which references are made, p. 165.

[‡‡] Barclay to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 350. On this same day, Sazonov claimed to have "positive indications which point to the possibility of Rumania's taking armed action against us on the side of Austria." Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 128. The Russian chargé in Belgrade said that Pashich had received

Carol, in spite of his criticism of Austro-Hungarian policy, was anxious for Rumania to take her place by the side of the Central Powers. It was therefore decided to hold a council of political leaders, to which the opposition would be invited, and to postpone the meeting until the return of M. Take Jonescu from London.*

During the next few days the Central Powers exerted themselves in lively fashion. Berlin communicated the assurances of Bulgaria that she would maintain "a friendly attitude";† Vienna urged Bulgaria to declare that "as long as Rumania stands by the Triple Alliance, she will have nothing to fear from Bulgaria."‡ The Emperor Francis Joseph telegraphed to King Carol, "a little too energetically, that as an officer and a king, I ought to keep my words and march side by side with his army against Russia."§ The German Government, after its declaration of war on Russia, requested "the immediate mobilization of the Rumanian army and its advance against Russia."‖ King Carol was then informed that "promising negotiations with Bulgaria for the conclusion of an alliance are pending," and he was asked whether a Bulgarian pledge in the treaty to renounce the Dobrudja, provided Rumania went with the Triple Alliance, would not be sufficient to make Rumania march against Russia.¶ As a last move, the news of the alliance with Turkey was communicated to Bucharest.** But no great hopes can have been entertained from these steps, for the report of the German chargé had shown the Rumanian prime minister in an unreceptive mood:

> Bratianu desires that the Rumanians in Transylvania should

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a telegram from Bucharest, according to which "there were serious indications that pointed to an inclination of Rumania to follow the Triple Alliance." Strandtmann to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Pokrovski, p. 166.

* Barclay to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 350; Radev to Radoslavov, telegram, 31 July; *KSF*, VI, 252 (March, 1928).

† Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 1 August; G 563.

‡ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 597.

§ Diary of King Carol, 2 August; Diamandy, *loc. cit.*, IXL, 817.

‖ Bethmann-Hollweg to Waldthausen, telegram, 2 August; G 646.

¶ Bethmann-Hollweg to Waldthausen, telegram, 3 August; G 729. For the German negotiations with Bulgaria, see below, pp. 444–445.

** Jagow to Waldburg, telegram, 3 August; G 743.

> be given certain assurances on the part of Hungary that after the war they would be granted more rights. With reference to Bessarabia, Bratianu declared that this would be of value to Rumania only if Russia had also to surrender other territories to Austria and Germany and was so weakened that this province would actually remain permanently with Rumania.

His assurance that "he would do everything to carry out the obligations of the alliance," was only a device to gain time, for he admitted that "public opinion was *absolutely* hostile to Austria."*

The Powers of the Triple Entente, on the other hand, seem to have done very little, realizing, no doubt, that threats would be useless. M. Sazonov contented himself with passing on the news that M. Poincaré was also in favor of promising Transylvania to Rumania.† Great Britain refused to offer any advice.‡ What France may have done is not known. On 1 August, the Russian minister still thought the Rumanian attitude "ambiguous,"§ and two days later he reported that "rumors of the inevitable victory of the Triple Alliance and the rearrangement of the map of Europe already determined upon makes a shattering impression on all classes of society."|| So far as the diplomatic documents show, the issue was still unsettled.

The crown council met at 5.30 P. M. on 3 August, "a day decisive for the history of Rumania," King Carol noted in his diary.¶ Before the meeting news was received that Italy, whose position was analogous with that of Rumania, had decided on neutrality;** this had considerable effect on the discussion.

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* Waldburg to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 582. But according to the Bulgarian minister in Rome, "Rumania proposed to Italy that they should make common cause with Germany and Austria, but she had been persuaded that she ought not to permit the annihilation of Serbia." Rizov to Radoslavov, telegram, 2 August; *KSF*, VI, 254 (March, 1928).

† Sazonov to Poklevski, telegram, 3 August; Pokrovski, p. 169. Poincaré had suggested promising Transylvania "without loss of time," in view of the danger that Rumania, according to the French minister in Bucharest, might even march with Austria-Hungary. Izvolski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; R, 1925 172.

‡ Grey to Barclay, telegram, 1 August; B 432.

§ Pokleski to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Pokrovski, p. 168.

|| Poklevski to Sazonov, telegram, 3 August; *ibid.*, p. 169.

¶ Diamandy, *loc. cit.*, IXL, 817.

** Berchtold heard on 31 July that the Rumanian Government had inquired in Rome, "whether Italy would regard the *casus foederis* as established in the event

Those present were M. Bratianu and the members of the government, the former premiers Theodore Rosetti and Peter Carp, the president of the chamber, Alexander Marghiloman, leader of the Conservatives, and two associates, and Take Jonescu, the Conservative-Democratic leader and two associates: a thoroughly representative gathering. The Crown Prince Ferdinand was also present.

The King opened the discussion by disclaiming any desire to base the national policy on sentiment. He considered that there were three possibilities before the country: neutrality, or adhesion to one of the belligerent groups. The first he rejected, because "history shows that countries which remain neutral in a general conflict are compelled to accept a subordinate place and are not considered at the conclusion of peace"; Rumania, he said, "does not deserve to be exposed to such a humiliation." He believed that the sentiment of Rumania was opposed to taking sides with Russia. So there remained only the third course: "to bind ourselves to the Triple Alliance."

> The latter wields military forces of such weight [he argued] that it is not doubtful that it will be victorious in this terrible war. For thirty years the policy of Rumania has been oriented toward the Triple Alliance; since then we have been bound to it by a formal engagement signed by our most important statesmen and accepted by all parties. It is a matter of honor for the entire country to respect its pledged word. This is the one condition on which we can count upon the Powers friendly to Rumania. It will not be easy to make public opinion understand the difficulties of the situation and the existing engagements, all the more so as other aims will insinuate themselves; but in spite of these strong currents, I am firmly convinced that the day will come when the country will approve of the policy which we now see ourselves forced to pursue.

And he concluded by saying that he had only one desire: "to insure to Rumania a brilliant future, which will place her on the same plane as the Great Powers."

of a general war." Berchtold to Szögyény and Mérey, telegrams, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,122.

Only Peter Carp supported the King. The rest were agreed that the *casus foederis* was not involved (for Russia had not attacked Austria-Hungary), and Alexander Marghiloman declared that the people would say, "This is the King's war." Take Jonescu even exclaimed, "Ultimately we might even enter the war on the side of France, without the consent of the King!"* a remark which so enraged the King that he threatened to "pack his trunk" and leave the country, and he actually left the meeting. The prime minister, recognizing that "if it was morally impossible to go with Russia, just as little could Rumania to-day take sides with Germany and Austria-Hungary," had stated his policy thus:

> There was nothing left for Rumania but temporarily to remain neutral. But he accepted the position of the King that a formal declaration of neutrality, which would expressly commit Rumania to neutrality toward the enemies of Germany and Austria-Hungary, ought not, for moral reasons, to be made. Rather the public opinion of the country should be prepared for co-operation with Germany and Austria-Hungary. During this time the government would take the necessary measures on all the frontiers of Rumania to protect the country against any pressure from without.

This policy was approved by the council, and formally adopted by the ministers later in the evening.† It had been for the King, as he noted in his diary, a "difficult day."‡

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* Lunching on the previous day with the King and Queen, Jonescu had said that "a German victory meant a Hungarian victory, and therefore was not compatible with maintaining the independence of Rumania"; he went on to predict four consequences of the war. "The first consequence will be a revival of international hatreds on such a scale as Europe has not seen for centuries. . . . The second consequence will be a sudden veering of opinion toward the ideas of the Extreme Left, what we call socialist ideas. . . . In the third place, madam, there will be what I can only describe as a cataract of crowns. . . . And lastly, this war will precipitate by at least half a century the establishment of America in the moral hegemony of the white race, an achievement inevitable in any case, but which the war will hasten." Jonescu, *Some Personal Impressions*, pp. 53–55.

† P. Lindenberg, *König Karl von Rumänien: ein Lebensbild dargestellt unter Mitarbeit des Königs* (Berlin, 1923), II, 306–311.

‡ Diamandy, *loc. cit.*, IXL, 817. Czernin lamented that the King did not possess sufficient energy to go against public sentiment; which Carp did possess. "If the King, without asking, had ordered mobilization, Carp's great energy would certainly have carried it through." Czernin, p. 124.

The decision was notified to the Powers the next day. Apparently following the cue of Italy, M. Bratianu justified the Rumanian attitude to the German and Austro-Hungarian ministers on the ground that "since Rumania had neither been advised nor consulted about the Austro-Hungarian *démarche* in Belgrade, no *casus foederis* existed"; he endeavored to sugar the pill by the argument that the military measures to be taken would be of advantage to Austria-Hungary "since her frontiers would thereby be protected for several hundred miles." He further stated that the council of ministers had decided to abandon the Treaty of Bucharest and to allow a Bulgarian intervention against Serbia, a "measure which would permit Austria-Hungary immediately to withdraw as many army corps from Serbia as Rumania could send to the Pruth"; provided, of course, that "this attitude on the part of Rumania was considered by the two empires as that proper to a state of friendly relations." As a kind of afterthought, M. Bratianu said that "perhaps at a later stage of the war it might become possible for Rumania to go against Russia."*

King Carol, who was "so overcome by spiritual and bodily anguish that he could no longer think" and had to go to bed, tried to console the two ministers. "As long as he was king," he said, "it was absolutely out of the question that Rumania should go against Austria."† The politicians wished to gain time, "until the result of the European war began to be clear"; if, as the King expected, the Central Powers won, then Rumania would join them.‡ But the German Emperor's verdict was correct: "A total collapse of both German and Austrian diplomacy."§ Both the Wilhelmstrasse and the Ballplatz, dominated as they were by monarchical sentiment, naïvely supposed that the King of Rumania could compel his government and his people to follow a course dictated by him rather than the one indicated by national instinct, and even after the Rumanian decision was known, the report was sent to Bucharest that "it can be definitely counted upon that Turkey and Bulgaria will help Rumania to conquer Bessarabia if the opportunity offers."* But the two governments prepared to make the best of the situation. After consultation with Berlin, Count Berchtold telegraphed to Bucharest:

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* Waldthausen to foreign office, telegram, 4 July; G 811, Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 4 August, in *Diplomatische Aktenstücke betreffend die Beziehungen Osterreich-Ungarns zu Rumänien* [cited hereafter as 'AR'], no. 4, is incomplete, but is reproduced in full in G 841.

† Waldthausen to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 868.

‡ Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 6 August; AR 7.

§ Comment on G 811.

> The two Central Powers appreciate the decisions of the crown council, and will consider them as those proper to friendly relations; they will continue to treat Rumania as our ally. Furthermore we shall pay full regard to Rumanian interests and definitely expect that Rumania will protect her frontiers in Moldavia and resist an eventual incursion by Russia.†

Bonne mine à mauvais jeu: but Count Czernin was certainly exaggerating when he reported that "our declaration has done more to knit the three Powers together than all other events of the last forty years."‡

The Russian minister in Bucharest was assured that the decision to take military measures on the frontiers signified the wish of Rumania "to adopt a waiting attitude," and that there was no intention of attacking Russia. On the contrary, "Rumania could not forget the benevolent attitude of His Imperial Majesty toward her [that is, in 1913], and the Rumanian Government could not go against the public opinion of the country."§ The minister seems to have been satisfied, at least for the moment, that while Rumania had not proclaimed her neutrality, she had not stood by her allies.

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* Foreign office to Waldthausen, telegram, 4 August; G 830. The suggestion came from Constantinople, but as a possibility rather than as a certainty. Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 795. The King told the German minister that "in the crown council the reacquisition of Bessarabia was objected to, because it would become only a second Alsace-Lorraine for Rumania." Waldthausen to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 868.

† Berchtold to Czernin, telegram, 4 August; AR 5. Cf. Jagow to Waldthausen, telegram, 4 August; G 847.

‡ Czernin to Berchtold, telegram, 5 August; AR 6.

§ Poklevski to Sazonov, telegram, 4 August; Pokrovski, pp. 169–170.

Caught between two fires, Rumania took the obvious course of doing nothing, which was all the easier because the *casus foederis* was not involved. Because of the Hungarian policy in Transylvania, she was unwilling to march with the Central Powers; because of the sad memories of 1878, when Russia had seized part of Bessarabia, she was equally unwilling to go along with Russia. She was forced, by the necessities of the case, to 'wait and see.' By declining to proclaim neutrality, she kept her hands free to act as circumstances demanded.

TURKEY

If the Central Powers were unable to carry Italy and Rumania into the war on their side, they were more fortunate in the case of Turkey. The Emperor Francis Joseph, in his autograph letter to the Emperor William, had suggested the desirability of reconciling Greece with Bulgaria and Turkey.* But the German Government showed itself cool to this idea:

> It would be more advantageous to negotiate and come to terms at first only with Bulgaria and leave it to the future whether Turkey and eventually Greece also should bind themselves to Bulgaria.†

In fact, the pessimistic reports of General Liman von Sanders‡ made a Turkish alliance seem more of a liability than an asset. "Turkey could only be regarded as a *passive* factor for some years, on account of the bad conditions in the army," said Herr von Jagow,§ and Baron von Wangenheim, the ambassador in Constantinople, was of the opinion that "Turkey is to-day without doubt still quite worthless as an ally."* So when, on 22 July, Enver Pasha, the Turkish minister of war and the strongest member of the government, declared that Turkey "needed the support of one group of the Great Powers" and "earnestly desired to connect herself with the Triple Alliance"—failing which she would have to join the Triple Entente—Wangenheim replied that he was "not convinced of the necessity of an alliance for Turkey":

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* Francis Joseph to William II, 2 July; A I 1.

† Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 6 July; A I 7. The German Government had been supporting the plan of a Rumanian-Greco-Turkish understanding. Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, 2 May, 1914; *G. P.*, XXXVI, 774. The Turks desired a Turco-Bulgarian-Rumanian alliance. Memorandum of Wangenheim, 9 May, 1914; *ibid.*, XXXVI, 786–787. See above, I, 91.

‡ Mühlmann, *Deutschland und die Türkei, 1913–1914*, p. 38.

§ Jagow to Tschirschky and Wangenheim, 14 July; G 45. Berchtold, being informed that "the preponderant part of authoritative circles [in Constantinople] can be considered friendly to the Triple Alliance" (Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegram, 12 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,127), had suggested sounding the Sublime Porte on the possibility of a *rapprochement* with the Central Powers. Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 13 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,237. Jagow raised the further objection that "presumably Turkey would come forward with demands on us and Germany which it would be impossible to fulfil." Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 16 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,297.

> As a member of the Triple Alliance, Turkey would have to count on the open hostility of Russia. The Turkish eastern frontier would then be the weakest point in the strategic position of the Triple Alliance and the natural place for Russia to attack. The governments of the Triple Alliance would probably hesitate to burden themselves with obligations for which Turkey to-day still had no corresponding equivalent to offer in return.†

He even persuaded his Austro-Hungarian colleague, the Marquis Pallavicini, to hold similar language to the grand vizier, Prince Said Halim.‡

The Austro-Hungarian note to Serbia gave great satisfaction to the Turks,§ and the prospect of a new Balkan war or even a European war was apparently welcomed,|| for "it would certainly afford an opportunity to upset the results of the Bal-

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* Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 18 July; G 71.

† Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 22 July; G 117.

‡ Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 23 July; G 149. For Pallavicini's statement to the grand vizier, see Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegram, 22 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,487. The Austro-Hungarian ambassador, convinced that Turkey would have to take sides in the approaching conflict, was fearful that, out of fear of Russia, she might come to terms with that Power, a danger which he thought was underestimated by Wangenheim. Since the Turkish statesmen were prodigal of assurances that Bulgaria had nothing to fear from Turkey in case she moved against Serbia (Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegrams, 13, 15, 21 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,243, 10,284, 10,453) Pallavicini urged the necessity of a Turco-Bulgarian alliance which would remove the temptation of a Turco-Russian agreement and facilitate the ultimate adhesion of both Turkey and Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance. Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegrams, 16, 18, 20 July, and despatch, 20 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,303, 10,355, 10,409, 10,412.

§ The grand vizier sent his congratulations to Berchtold. Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,598.

|| Pallavicini to Berchtold, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,673.

kan alliance."* So, when rebuffed by Germany, they let it be understood to the Powers of the Entente that their attitude would be "one of expectancy" and that their policy would be "guided by future events."† But this was obviously only a device to impress the Germans,‡ for on 27 July the formal offer was made of a "secret offensive and defensive alliance against Russia" which would make possible Turkey's entrance into the Triple Alliance.§ And this time, there was no rebuff.

For the German Emperor qualified as "nonsense" his ambassador's opinion that Turkey "ought not to enter upon any kind of alliance," and said:

> It is now a question of getting hold of every gun which is ready in the Balkans to let go *for* Austria against the Slavs, therefore a Turco-Bulgarian alliance connected with Austria is certainly to be accepted! This is opportunist politics, but must be pursued in this case.||

A recommendation was thereupon telegraphed from the *Hohenzollern* that "for reasons of expediency" the Turkish inclinations should be taken advantage of and Baron von Wangenheim instructed accordingly,¶ which was done.** "Under no circum-

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* Pallavicini to Berchtold, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,674.

† Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 26 July; B 151. Giers to Sazonov, telegrams, 26 July, 27 July; Pokrovski, pp. 3–4.

‡ The French and Russian ambassadors were agreed that the prestige of Russia had sunk very low in Turkey. Bompard stated the general opinion to be that "again this time Russia will not intervene in favor of Serbia" and that "Austria, with the support of Germany . . . will make Serbia enter, after Bulgaria, into the Triple Alliance." Bompard to Viviani, 27 July; *Affaires balkaniques*, III, 147. Giers urged upon his government the desirability of strengthening the Black Sea fleet and preparing the army if Russia did not wish to be caught unprepared for war. Giers to Sazonov, 27 July; Pokrovski, pp. 4–5. The grand vizier gave the Austro-Hungarian ambassador the assurance that "if the conflict were extended and in consequence Russia should participate, Turkey would be on our side and as a matter of course co-operate with Bulgaria." Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegram, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,730. The Porte was also ready to arouse the Moslems of New Serbia (Macedonia) against Serbia. Pallavicini to Berchtold, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,675.

§ Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, "absolutely secret," 28 July; G 285. The grand vizier stated that it was "indispensable" to keep the matter secret from the Turkish ambassador in Berlin, who favored an agreement with Russia, and was suspicious of German policy; Moukhtar, *La Turquie, l'Allemagne et l'Europe*, p. 255.

|| Comments on G 117.

¶ Wedel to foreign office, telegram, from Balestrand, 24 July; G 141.

** Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, 24 July; G 144.

stances whatever," said William, "ought we to turn [the Turks] away":

> A refusal or a snub would mean their going over to Russo-Gaul, and our influence would be gone once for all! In respect of their adhesion to the Triple Alliance, Wangenheim ought to express himself to the Turks in an unconditionally and plainly receptive fashion, and listen to and report their wishes.*

Confronted with this "peremptory order," the ambassador "dropped his scruples," and began negotiating with the Turks.†

The terms offered by Turkey were quite generous. (1) The *casus foederis* would arise "if Russia attacked Turkey or Germany (or Austria), or if either Germany or the Triple Alliance should make an attack on Russia." (2) The question of capitulations, the Public Debt, etc., should not be raised. (3) In the event of war, the German military mission should be left in Turkey. (4) A method would be found by which the high command of the Turkish army and the actual command of a quarter of the army would be transferred to the military mission.‡ The Turks were evidently anxious to attack Russia. Their offer was accepted at once by the German Government, which formulated its understanding of the terms thus:

> 1. Both Powers pledge themselves to observe strict neutrality in the present conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.
>
> 2. If Russia should resort to active military intervention in the war and the *casus foederis* for Germany with respect to Austria-Hungary be thereby established, the *casus foederis* will also arise for Turkey.
>
> 3. In the event of war, Germany will leave the military mis-

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* Comment on G 149. This was communicated to Wangenheim. The Cabinet of Vienna was also informed. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,657.

† Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 256. He recanted his opinion to the extent of saying that he would change his estimate "if the Turkish army were actually commanded by German officers." Liman von Sanders thought that Turkey could supply four or five corps of well-equipped troops; the grand vizier talked of 250,000 men. Pallavicini to Berchtold, 21, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,455, 10,673.

‡ Wangenheim to foreign office, 28 July; G 285.

sion in Turkey. Turkey will assure the *actual* exercise of the high command by the military mission.

4. Germany guarantees to Turkey as against Russia the present extent of her territory.

5. The treaty shall be valid for the present conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia and for any international complications which may eventually arise out of it. In case this conflict does not lead to a war between Germany and Russia, the treaty shall become automatically inoperative.*

But the German limitation of the alliance to the event of a Russo-German war was "entirely unacceptable" to the Turks: having compromised themselves by their overtures, they insisted on being protected "if Russia should wish to revenge herself on Turkey for her friendly attitude toward the Triple Alliance." The grand vizier therefore proposed that the treaty should run until 1918, which was the period of Liman von Sanders' contract.† As the German Government had by this time practically decided on war,‡ it declared its readiness to conclude the alliance "immediately" and authorized Wangenheim to sign the treaty, provided he was convinced that "Turkey can and will in the present war undertake action against Russia worthy of the name."§

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* Bethmann-Hollweg to Wangenheim, telegram, 28 July; G 320.

† Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 30 July, received 11.59 A. M.; G 411. Zimmermann commented: "In case we do not meet the Turks at the present moment, we shall, in my opinion, drive them into the arms of our opponents. I think that in the present serious circumstances we should agree to the treaty extending to 1918,—the end of the Liman Mission,— but in this event unconditionally draw in Austria-Hungary as a second party to the compact." Actually, instructions had already been sent to Pallavicini to co-operate fully with Wangenheim, for "we can only desire that the adhesion of Turkey to the Triple Alliance may be accomplished by means of a treaty with Germany." Berchtold to Pallavicini, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,890.

‡ See above, p. 272.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Wangenheim, telegram, "urgent, secret," 31 July; G 508. At Wangenheim's request (Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 29 July; G 398), he was allowed to inform Pallavicini of the negotiations (Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, 30 July; G 431); as a matter of fact, Wangenheim had already told Pallavicini (Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegrams, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,807, 10,808). Berchtold promised that Austria-Hungary would adhere to the German-Turkish treaty in the same manner that Germany had adhered to the Austro-Rumanian treaty of 1883 (Berchtold to Pallavicini, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,056), and would "assume the same obligations as Germany" (Berchtold to Pallavicini, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,150). The necessary instructions appear to have been

The treaty was signed by the ambassador and the grand vizier at 4 P. M. on 2 August.* In addition to the terms already agreed upon, it provided that if not denounced six months before its expiration (31 December, 1918), it should remain in force for another five years; it was to be ratified within a month by the German Emperor and the Sultan.†

General von Moltke desired that "the treaty of alliance with Turkey should be made public immediately" and that Turkey should declare war on Russia "as soon as possible."‡ On neither point did his wishes prevail. The foreign office insisted on keeping the treaty secret,§ although it was soon urging the Porte to declare war on Russia.|| The grand vizier, however, did not wish to act until the Turkish mobilization had been completed and the attitude of Bulgaria ascertained.¶ A treaty of alliance and friendship between Turkey and Bulgaria was signed on 6 August,** but the approach of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau,* which had escaped from their British pursuers, enabled the Turkish Government to demand new concessions from Germany. Since the admission of the German ships into the Dardanelles would constitute a breach of neutrality which might provoke the Triple Entente to declare war, the grand vizier asked for a clear guarantee of the integrity of Turkey, a share in the war indemnity, German support for the abolition of the capitulations, and increases of territory.†† As there was not

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sent on 1 August (Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, 1 August; G 586). In order to accelerate the signature of the treaty, Berchtold informed the Porte that "from a reliable source we hear that Russia intends to force the Straits with the Black Sea fleet" (Berchtold to Pallavicini, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,149).

* Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 726. Djemal, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman*, pp. 108–109, states that the treaty was signed without his being consulted. According to *Denkwürdigkeiten des Marschalls Izzet Pascha*, p. 265, the *sheik-ul-Islam* and the ministers of marine, justice, finances, and public works were presented with the *fait accompli.*

† G 733. The grand vizier stipulated for ratification by the sovereigns to insure the treaty remaining in force even if he were turned out of office.

‡ Moltke to foreign office, 2 August; G 662.

§ Jagow to Tschirschky and Wangenheim, telegrams, "urgent," 3 August; G 750, 751.

|| Jagow to Wangenheim, telegram, "urgent, secret," 4 August; G 836.

¶ Wangenheim to foreign office, telegrams, 3 August, 4 August; G 795, 854.

** Radoslavov, *Bulgarien und die Weltkrise*, p. 117, note.

†† Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 6 August; Mühlmann, *Deutschland und*

sufficient time to consult Berlin, the German ambassador on his own responsibility addressed a letter to the grand vizier accepting the Turkish conditions in case Turkey became involved in war with the Triple Entente and provided that "Germany and her allies emerge victorious from the present war and Germany is in a position to dictate her will to the belligerents."* The two German warships were allowed to enter the Dardanelles on 10 August. But nearly three months were to elapse before Turkey joined in the war on the side of the Central Powers.

The effort to keep the fact of the alliance secret was eminently successful. The grand vizier, after telling the Russian ambassador that "the Austrian ambassador was endeavoring to induce Turkey to take concerted action with Austria," stated that "he was convinced of the necessity for Turkey to keep out of the conflict,"† and assured the French ambassador that "it was his intention to proclaim the neutrality of Turkey."‡ When the Turkish mobilization was ordered on 2 August, the grand vizier explained that only so many men would be called up "as may be necessary to organize an army of 200,000 men in Thrace" and that "there was no intention to concentrate an army on the Caucasian frontier."§ Enver Pasha gave the French ambassador to understand that he had offered to release the German military mission, but "Liman von Sanders replied that Berlin had ordered them to remain in Turkey";|| the British chargé was assured that the "retention of German military mission meant nothing and had no political significance."¶ Finally the British Government was formally notified that

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die Türkei, p. 45. The territories asked for were Kars, Ardahan and Batum, which had been lost to Russia in 1878, and the islands taken by Greece in the Balkan war, in case Greece joined the Entente.

* Wangenheim to Said Halim, 6 August; *ibid.*, pp. 96–97.

† Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 1 August; Russia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Diplomatic Documents: Negotiations covering the period from July 19/August 1 to October 19/November 1, 1914 preceding the War with Turkey* (Petrograd, 1915) [cited hereafter as 'RT,' by number], no. 1.

‡ Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 2 August; RT 2. Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 516.

§ Giers to Sazonov, telegrams, 2 August, 3 August; RT 3, 5. Cf. Beaumont to Grey, telegrams, 3 August; B 583, 586.

|| Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 3 August; RT 6.

¶ Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 605.

> the general mobilization which has just been proclaimed throughout the empire has only the object of guaranteeing the territories of the Ottoman Empire, the Imperial Government having decided to maintain a strict neutrality in the present conflict.*

The British Government had indeed heard that "German Government are using all their influence to persuade Ottoman Government to join force with Triple Alliance and attack Russia on Asiatic frontier";† it was informed that a German colonel would apparently command the IV corps,‡ and that ammunition carts and six steel ferry troop boats from Germany had been landed at Alexandretta;§ it was warned that the detention of a Turkish battleship building in Great Britain|| had caused "some vexation" and was looked upon as "an unfriendly act."¶ These several hints were disregarded, for the chargé at Constantinople was instructed as follows:

> You should earnestly impress upon Grand Vizier that Turkish interests would be best served by maintaining a strict neutrality. If Turkey were to be drawn into the war as an ally of Germany and Austria the gravest consequences would follow.
>
> You must, however, be careful to give to your communication the character of good advice from Turkey's oldest friend, and avoid anything to give rise to an impression that we are threatening.**

A few days later, a specific promise was added:

> If Turkey remains neutral and Egypt remains quiet, and should no unforeseen circumstances arise, His Majesty's Gov-

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* Tewfik Pasha to Grey, 4 August; B 598. The Russian ambassador in Constantinople was informed by the grand vizier of the decision. Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 4 August; RT 7.

† Bax-Ironside to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 564.

‡ Heathcote-Smith to Grey, telegram, from Smyrna, 2 August; B 501.

§ Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 548.

|| The Turkish crew had arrived in Great Britain to take the ship out to Turkey.

¶ Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 3 August; Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Correspondence respecting Events leading to the Rupture of Relations with Turkey* (Cd. 7628, London, 1914) [cited henceforth as 'BT,' by number], no. 2.

** Grey to Beaumont, telegram, 4 August; B 589.

ernment do not propose to alter the status of Egypt . . . we have no intention of injuring Turkey.*

A "most emphatic assurance" from the grand vizier that "nothing will induce Turkey to join Austria and Germany as long as he remains in power" was considered by the British chargé to have "a certain value,"† and was accepted by the British Government. For some weeks British policy was guided by the assumption that Turkey really intended or could be induced to remain neutral.

The Russian ambassador in Constantinople was more suspicious of the Turkish intentions, and from some remarks of his Bulgarian colleague drew the conclusion that "an agreement between Turkey and Germany for common action against us has already been made"; but he thought it not likely to come into force soon, on account of the unpreparedness of the Turkish army.‡ Meanwhile Enver Pasha was making overtures to the Russian military attaché, General Leontyev, for a Turkish-Russian combination: Turkey would support the Balkan states against Austria-Hungary if Russia could "reconcile the Balkan states with each other and with Turkey on the basis of mutual concessions." He suggested that Turkey might receive the Ægean Islands and Western Thrace, and Greece get compensation in Epirus, Bulgaria in Macedonia, and Serbia in Bosnia-Herzegovina.§ If a bargain could be struck, and Enver Pasha declared that "contrary to the prevailing opinion, Turkey has not yet joined the Triple Alliance," all German officers would be eliminated from Turkish service.|| The ambassador, although still suspicious, urged the acceptance of Enver's offer.¶ Nothing came of this, however. After the arrival of the *Goeben* and *Breslau,* the Entente Powers entered upon long negotiations

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* Grey to Beaumont, telegram, 7 August; BT 5.

† Beaumont to Grey, telegram, 9 August; BT 6.

‡ Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 5 August; Pokrovski, p. 10. For the conversation with Toshev, see Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 5 August; *ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

§ Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 5 August; *ibid.*, pp. 7–8.

|| Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 9 August; *ibid.*, p. 13.

¶ Giers to Sazonov, telegram, 9 August; *ibid.*, p. 15.

to insure the neutrality of Turkey, but that story cannot be told here. Down to the very moment of rupture in November, 1914, they do not seem to have learned the secret of the Turco-German alliance.

From the Turkish point of view, the problem was simple. Russia was the traditional enemy of the Ottoman Empire, whose ultimate designs on the Straits were not doubted. Russia was now at war with the greatest military power in Europe. For Turkey not to take advantage of this circumstance seemed folly. The strange thing is, not that Turkey entered into an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, but that the Powers of the Triple Entente should have believed that they could offer Turkey sufficient inducements to remain neutral.

BULGARIA

If Turkey had pretended to make her conduct dependent on the attitude of Bulgaria, the latter state declared that it would "take no action without having come to an agreement with Turkey."* But this was apparently a secondary factor with the Bulgarian Government, for, without waiting for the expected crisis between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, the Bulgarian premier, on 14 July, asked the Austrian minister in Sofia whether he thought that "the Bulgarian Government could now successfully renew its proposal for a formal alliance." Count Tarnowski, who had just returned from a conference in Vienna† and brought the draft of an alliance,‡ replied in the affirmative, and asked M. Radoslavov to "formulate propositions."§ The premier promised to do so after he had secured the approval of the King.‖ An overture was also made to the German minister,¶ to whom it was explained that as a result of the loan recently concluded in Germany,* "the government was now firmly established and could begin to follow a course of its own."† Since the situation created by the Austro-Hungarian note to Serbia was hailed as a "great unexpected bit of fortune for Bulgaria,"‡ the conclusion of a treaty might have seemed easy. Certainly both M. Radoslavov and Count Tarnowski desired an immediate consummation.

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* Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 24 July; G 147. The Bulgarian premier told the Austro-Hungarian minister, however, that "he now felt quite secure with respect to Turkey." Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,625.

† See above, I, 349.

‡ *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,389, note *c*.

§ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 14 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,310.

‖ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 19 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,389.

¶ Tarnowski had been authorized to say that the German Government "is disposed to the idea of Bulgaria's adhering to the Triple Alliance." Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 17 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,340.

But this did not prove possible. King Ferdinand went to the country on 20 July, and although on his return he "received with satisfaction the news that Austria-Hungary and Germany were ready to admit Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance,"§ he declined to grant an audience to Count Tarnowski,|| and seemed to hesitate about taking so momentous a step.¶ He took his time about examining the draft of a treaty submitted by his premier,** and finally left the capital on a motoring excursion,†† from which he did not return until 31 July.‡‡ The motives for the King's hesitation are not revealed in the available documents; one may guess that his calculating disposition made him reluctant to take sides so early in the conflict, when its results could not be predicted.

Count Berchtold was also in no hurry to conclude the alli-

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* See above, I, 161.

† Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 162. The Russian minister had appealed to the King not to ratify the loan. Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 18 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,370, note b. In St. Petersburg the loan was regarded as "a political engagement with the Triple Alliance," and Sazonov demanded the payment of 10,000,000 rubles which Bulgaria owed to Russia. Dimitriev to Radoslavov, 21 July; *KSF*, VI, 235 (March, 1928).

‡ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,623. Pallavicini hinted to the Bulgarian minister in Constantinople that the recovery of Macedonia might be expected as a reward if Bulgaria took the side of Austria against Serbia. Toshev to Radoslavov, 21 July; *KSF*, VI, 237.

§ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 23 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,555.

|| Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 23 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,556. He held Tarnowski responsible for the cool reception accorded him in Vienna in the autumn of 1913 (see above, I, 160). For Radoslavov's excuses for the King, see Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,624.

¶ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,691.

** Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,926.

†† Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,105. "Striking nonchalance," Tarnowski complained.

‡‡ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,188.

ance. Well aware of the Rumanian suspicions toward Bulgaria,* he informed Count Tarnowski that

> in case it should come to a conflict between the Monarchy and Serbia, it would seem to be of particular importance that Bulgaria should remain officially neutral, in order not to jeopardize the possibility of the localization of the war.†

If Russia intervened on behalf of Serbia, he was counting on the possibility of Rumania's participation with the Triple Alliance, or at least remaining neutral, "as long as Bulgaria does not join in the conflict": wherefore Bulgaria should give the necessary assurances in Bucharest. Count Tarnowski was to let the Bulgarian statesmen understand that "at the proper moment the Monarchy will be ready to take account of the historical claims of Bulgaria to Macedonia," but only if Rumania assumed a hostile attitude toward the Monarchy would the active support of Bulgaria be desired.‡ To impress this view on the Bulgarian Government, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister transmitted to Sofia the news received from Bucharest that "in case Bulgaria begins war with Serbia, the Rumanian army will be mobilized immediately,"§ and he added the solemn warning that if Bulgaria were to attack Rumania, "we should leave Bulgaria to her sad fate."‖ In other words, Count Berchtold did not, could not, come to terms with Bulgaria until the position of Rumania had been determined.

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* See above, pp. 419–420.

† Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 21 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,462.

‡ Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 23 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,550. Berchtold added, however, that "in any case, it would be very desirable for us if the Macedonian committees in Bulgaria were immediately to start intensive activities, which would naturally be represented abroad as not influenced by the government and officially denied in a categorical manner; their principal purpose would be directed to destroying the means of communication (bridges, railways, telegraphs), in order to shut Serbia off in the south from Salonica and in the east from Bulgaria." The matter was taken up by the military attaché, and the Bulgarian authorities promised to send *komitadjis* to Macedonia at once; also that care would be taken not to let the hand of the government be seen, in order not to prejudice relations with Rumania. Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegrams, 28, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,922, 11,097.

§ Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,838. The necessity of the strictest neutrality was also impressed on the Bulgarian minister in Vienna. Report of 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,760. Stanchov to Radoslavov, 27 July; *KSF*, VI, 245–246. Cf. also Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 27 July; G 259.

‖ Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,874.

Not only by Vienna, but also by Berlin* and St. Petersburg† was Bulgaria advised to remain neutral, Russia warning her against the Turks, Germany urging her not to irritate Rumania. Nor was this all, for the Greek and Rumanian Governments conveyed a joint warning that they would "use their utmost endeavors to maintain the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest."‡ Bulgaria, at least for the moment, bowed to the inevitable and announced her neutrality.§

"Most binding assurances" of an "unconditional neutrality" toward Rumania were conveyed to Count Berchtold.‖ But the Russian minister in Sofia was correct in thinking that Bulgaria's neutrality was of "a purely expectative character,"¶ for the Rumanian Government was informed that a friendly attitude would be maintained and the Dobrudja renounced, "provided that Rumania will place no obstacles in the way of Bulgarian aspirations in Macedonia."** The premier, M. Radoslavov,

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* Markov to Radoslavov, 29 July; *KSF*, VI, 248.

† Dimitriev to Radoslavov, telegram, 25 July; *ibid.*, VI, 241.

‡ Bax-Ironside to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 267. "Greek and Rumanian Governments have warned Bulgaria jointly that they will not tolerate her intervention." Erskine to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 224.

§ Strandtmann to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; R 52. Bassewitz to foreign office, telegrams, 28 July, 30 July; G 336, 436. The Serbian minister in Sofia stated that "Bulgaria will profit, if [she remains] benevolently neutral." Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,843.

‖ Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,847. Szögyény to German foreign office, 28 July; G 305.

¶ Savinski to Sazonov, telegram, 29 July; Pokrovski, p. 64. The British minister was of the opinion that "as regards Bulgaria, whatever statement she may make officially, she will wait to see which way the cat jumps before taking any decisive action." Bax-Ironside to Nicolson, private, 29 July; B 653. The three leading members of the government openly asked the Austrian minister "what increases of territory Bulgaria might expect." Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,846.

** Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 548. The declaration was made at the demand of Berchtold, who was still playing for the assistance of Rumania (see above, p. 423). Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegram, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,006. The Bulgarian ministers made their position clear to Tarnowski: "On the one hand, they are counting on it here that after our war against Serbia, the Serbian part of Macedonia will fall to Bulgaria; on the other hand, they fear that Rumania will cling to the Treaty of Bucharest and oppose a territorial aggrandizement of Bulgaria. They appear to think that it will be the business of Austria-Hungary and Germany to dissuade Rumania—in case she remains true to the Triple Alliance—from her opposition to the aggrandizement of Bulgaria, who will likewise belong to the Triple Alliance, and facilitate an understanding between the two states. Bulgaria will pledge herself to respect Rumania's territory (Dobrudja) and will consent to an eventful aggrandizement of Rumania at the cost of Serbia;

gave "a curt refusal" to the suggestion of the Russian minister that "all the Balkan states should form a new alliance for the purpose of aiding Serbia," saying that "Bulgaria would not lift a finger for the benefit of Serbia.* In Russia, so the minister in St. Petersburg reported, Bulgaria was looked upon "almost as a traitor to Slavdom," but it was "not yet too late for her to follow her natural course."†

After the declaration of war on Russia, the attitude of the German Government underwent a change: it decided to urge upon Vienna the conclusion of "an immediate understanding with Bulgaria" and instructed its minister to Sofia to support "emphatically" any Austro-Hungarian proposal.‡ Whether the Austro-Hungarian Government made any proposal, is not known;§ more probably it waited for the Bulgarian premier to submit, as he promised to do, the draft of a treaty. In any case, the Bulgarian Government on 2 August proposed the accession of Bulgaria to the Triple Alliance on the following terms:

> 1. The Triple Alliance guarantees to Bulgaria her present territories against any attack, from whatever side it may come.
> 2. The Triple Alliance promises its support to Bulgaria in her efforts to acquire territory in the future in those regions in which she possesses historical and ethnographical rights and which are under the rule of a state not belonging to the Triple Alliance.

Only, M. Radoslavov added, if Rumania went over to the side

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but, on the other hand, Rumania must abandon the standpoint of the Treaty of Bucharest, for the Triple Alliance itself has an interest in the aggrandizement of Bulgaria." Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,182.

* Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 318. To the Russian minister's appeal to "the Slav feeling of Bulgaria," Radoslavov was said to have replied, "Bulgarians feel themselves Slavs, but first of all Bulgarians." Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,921.

† Dimitriev to Radoslavov, 31 July; *KSF*, VI, 252–253.

‡ Jagow to Michahelles, telegram, 1 August; G 549. A telegram to Vienna (Jagow to Tschirschky, 1 August; G 555) urging this course was drafted, but not sent.

§ Unfortunately the documents in *Ö.-U. A.* do not extend beyond 31 July. Up to that date, Berchtold had not gone beyond urging Bulgaria to effect a *rapprochement* with Turkey. Berchtold to Tarnowski, telegrams, 30, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,096, 11,181.

of Russia, would Bulgaria claim a free hand to "make good once more claims to the Dobrudja."* The German Government was ready to accept this proposal, on condition that Bulgaria concluded separate treaties with Germany and Austria-Hungary and that Bulgarian aspirations did not extend to Turkey, in case the latter made an alliance with the Central Powers or observed benevolent neutrality.† The minister in Sofia was authorized to begin negotiations, but as a precaution was asked to find out "what active obligations, especially from a military point of view, Bulgaria proposes to undertake."‡ Count Berchtold was urged to send instructions promptly to Count Tarnowski, the Austro-Hungarian minister in Sofia;§ he promised to do so.‖ But he took his time, for up to the afternoon of 4 August, no instructions had reached Count Tarnowski.¶ So, although the German Government found satisfactory the Bulgarian promise "to march her army in full force at the request of Germany against any of its neighbors who may be on the side of Germany's enemies,"** no treaty was concluded at this time. Perhaps even after Rumania had refused to march with her allies, Count Berchtold was unwilling to make an agreement with Bulgaria, lest such a step drive Rumania into the arms of the Entente Powers.

Meanwhile, Russia had been trying to bully Bulgaria. On 3 August M. Sazonov despatched a strong note to Sofia:

> In the present decisive moment through which we are passing, the attitude of Bulgaria will possibly determine her relation to Russia for ever. The possibility is offered the directors of Bulgarian policy to eliminate all misunderstandings, to restore the connection between Russia and Bulgaria with new strength and,

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* Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 673.

† Bethmann-Hollweg to Michahelles, telegram, "secret," 2 August; G 697.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Michahelles, telegram, 3 August; G 828.

§ Bethmann-Hollweg to Tschirschky, telegram, 2 August; G 698.

‖ Tschirschky to foreign office, telegrams, 4 August; G 798, 861.

¶ Michahelles to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 857.

** Jagow to Michahelles, telegram, 5 August; G 873. Germany also agreed to Bulgaria's taking the field against Serbia. Berlin renewed its pressure on Vienna to send the necessary instructions. Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 5 August; G 872.

> by facing the test which is coming, to draw nearer to the realization of the national ideal. To this end a conscientious, honorable agreement on the part of Bulgaria with the undertaking of Russia is necessary. In the event of territorial conquests by Serbia, Bulgaria can get real advantages.* If, on the other hand, Bulgaria sows discord in Macedonia or cherishes sinister intentions toward Serbia, such an attitude on the part of Bulgaria will, in view of Russia's entry into the war, be regarded by us as an openly hostile action against Russia and will create a gulf for ever between the two peoples. The leaders of Bulgaria will bear a personal responsibility for the policy to be adopted, and we should like to believe that Bulgaria will remember and not betray the best traditions of her history and will definitely declare her intentions to enter into negotiations with us for the harmonization of our mutual interests.†

The Russian minister in Sofia thought M. Radoslavov impressed by the counsels of Russia.‡ Nevertheless, the Bulgarian reply to the Russian note was a distinct refusal. After saying that in the presence of "the most fearful war known in history," the Bulgarian Government "is thinking neither of realizing its national ideals or of territorial expansions" but only of the security of the country, it repudiated the insinuation that the government was guided by personal motives; it promised, however, to provoke no disturbances in Macedonia and to try to prevent bands from passing the frontier.§ M. Sazonov found this answer "not sincere,"* and sent an even sharper note to Sofia:

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* "Russia has proposed to Bulgaria to take sides with her, and will receive Macedonia for so doing. Serbia would be compensated by Bosnia and the Herzegovina." Waldthausen to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 794. On 31 July Sazonov had advised Serbia to sound Bulgaria on the possibility of military co-operation and to offer a territorial concession "in case Serbia should receive compensation elsewhere." Sazonov to Strandtmann, telegram, 31 July; R, 1925 125 (see above, p. 315). On 5 August Sazonov urged Pashich to offer Bulgaria Ishtip and Kochana; he reminded Serbia that Russia had been drawn into war "for the defense of Serbia," and that Serbia's sacrifices bore no relation to those which Russia must make or to the gains that might be expected. Sazonov to Strandtmann, telegram, 5 August; Pokrovski, pp. 65–66.

† Sazonov to Savinski, telegram, 3 August; Pokrovski, p. 65; Radoslavov, *Bulgarien und die Weltkrise*, pp. 136–137. Sazonov read the note to the Bulgarian minister in St. Petersburg, who reported to Sofia his opinion "as a soldier" that "Austria and Germany have little chance of victory," and urged his government not to flout Russia. Dimitriev to Radoslavov, telegram, 4 August; *KSF*, VI, 259.

‡ Savinski to Sazonov, telegram, 9 August, Pokrovski, pp. 66–67.

§ Radoslavov, pp. 137–138. An interview of the Russian minister with King Ferdinand proved fruitless. Savinski to Sazonov, 15 August; Pokrovski, pp. 71–

> We expect a quite precise and immediate answer to our proposal with reference to neutrality, with the engagement to prevent action by Turkey. In case we do not receive a quite precise answer or if the answer is delayed, we warn the Bulgarian Government that Russia reserves complete freedom of action, which results from her alliance with Serbia, and that she leaves to the directors of Bulgaria's present policy the responsibility for the consequences. In case Bulgaria points to the difficulty of fulfilling this task alone, you may say that in the event of an affirmative answer, Bulgaria can count on the support of our Black Sea fleet.†

Since Bulgaria had by this time concluded an agreement with Turkey,‡ her answer was short and imperative:

> Since the Bulgarian Government must consider that nothing important has happened to modify its previous decision respecting the neutrality of the country, it regards it as its duty to inform the imperial [Russian] legation that Bulgaria will continue to observe the strictest neutrality and to look to the defense of its territory.§

Russia, then, had lost entirely in her effort to bring Bulgaria into the war on her side. But the Central Powers had failed

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73. Savinski told Radoslavov that "the mere fact that at the first news of the declaration of war Bulgaria has not rushed like one man to the assistance of her deliverer is monstrous in itself; Russia can well manage without you. But if you take a hand in a combination hostile to Russia, Bulgaria shall risk her very existence." A. Savinsky, *Recollections of a Russian Diplomat* (London, n. d.), p. 242. The Russian minister seems consistently to have used threatening language.

* Sazonov to Savinski, telegram, 9 August; Pokrovski, p. 68.

† Sazonov to Savinski, telegram, 11 August; Pokrovski, pp. 68–69.

‡ Radoslavov, p. 117, note. This had been urged by Berchtold (see above, p. 423). Radoslavov at first tried to make negotiations with Turkey dependent upon the conclusion of the German-Bulgarian alliance (Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,186), but on receiving the news that a Turco-Bulgarian commercial treaty had been signed, he declared his willingness "to enter upon conversations with Turkey concerning a harmonious attitude of the two states" (Tarnowski to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,193). The terms of the agreement of 6 August, 1914, have not been revealed.

§ Note of 12 August; Radoslavov, p. 139.

to take advantage of the desires and sympathies of the Bulgarian Government, and it was not until the autumn of 1915 that Bulgaria finally made the plunge.

GREECE

At the moment when the European crisis broke, the Greek premier, M. Venizelos, was on his way to Brussels, where he was to meet the Turkish grand vizier, Prince Said Halim, for a discussion of the question of the Ægean islands, which had been in dispute since the close of the Balkan wars. Both statesmen were seemingly ready to consider an alliance between their countries as a possible solution of a problem which was essentially military.* At Trieste M. Venizelos learned that the German Government had made representations in Athens to the effect that

> it would be desirable for Greece to break away from Serbia in time; that, in such circumstances, the conclusion of an alliance with Turkey would now seem to be impracticable, but that an arrangement for mutual neutrality would seem to be indicated.†

When he reached Munich, he was informed that the Serbian premier, M. Pashich, had asked the direct question

> whether the Serbian Government can count on armed assistance on the part of Greece: (1) in case Serbia is attacked by Austria; (2) in case Serbia is attacked by Bulgaria.‡

The answer to the Serbian inquiry depended upon the exact meaning of the Serbo-Greek treaty of alliance of 1 June, 1913, Article I of which read as follows:

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* The Greek foreign minister, M. Streit, was optimistic about the results of the meeting. Szilassy to Berchtold, 23 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,516. The Turks, however, seem not to have taken the matter seriously, regarding it merely as a device to gain time. Pallavicini to Berchtold, telegram, 22 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,489.

† Streit to Venizelos, telegram, 24 July; Greece, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques, 1913–1917* (Athens, 1917; Paris, 1918) [cited hereafter as 'Greek,' by number], no. 11. Cf. Jagow to Bassewitz, telegram, 23 July; G 122.

‡ Alexandropoulos to Venizelos, telegram, 25 July; Greek 12.

> The two high contracting parties expressly stipulate for the mutual guarantee of their possessions and assume the engagement in case, contrary to their hopes, one of the two kingdoms should be attacked without any provocation on its part, to lend each other assistance with all their forces and not to conclude peace subsequently except jointly and in agreement.*

Did this article apply to an Austro-Serbian war, or only to a Serbo-Bulgarian war?

The Greek premier evidently adopted the second interpretation, for he telegraphed to Athens:

> In regard to our attitude in case of an armed conflict between Austria and Serbia, while reserving entirely our opinion as to the application of the treaty of alliance [which appears to be excluded in the present circumstances because of the provocative conduct of Serbia], it would be necessary not to leave any doubt in the minds of our interlocutors about our determination not to remain with arms folded in presence of a Bulgarian attack on Serbia. It would be impossible for us to allow such an attack which might result in an aggrandizement of Bulgaria and endanger the Treaty of Bucharest.†

To Belgrade he replied that he "must come to an understanding with His Majesty the King and the Royal Government"; he added as his "personal opinion" that an Austro-Serbian war would be "a real calamity," but that "if by misfortune the war broke out, we should come to a decision as soon as we had knowledge of all the factors, at the same time taking into account the efficiency of our assistance." In the event of a Bulgarian attack on Serbia, he would propose to the King and the government "to use all our forces against Bulgaria" for the defense of the Treaty of Bucharest.‡ Greece, then, did not intend to assist Serbia against Austria-Hungary alone.*

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* Greek 2.

† Venizelos to Streit, telegram, from Munich, 25 July; Greek 14. The words in brackets were suppressed in the Greek *White Book*. They are given in A. F. Frangulis, *La Grèce et la crise mondiale* (Paris, 1926), I, 136. Venizelos had already informed Streit that "if, as seems probable, the responsibility of Serbia for the tragedy of Sarajevo is established," Serbia should be advised to show great conciliation to Austria. Venizelos to Streit, telegram, personal, from Trieste, 24 July; *ibid.*, I, 136.

‡ Venizelos to Alexandropoulos, telegram, 26 July; Greek 15.

Meanwhile the minister of foreign affairs, M. Streit, had informed the German chargé in Athens that "Greece will *not* take part in an Austro-Serbian conflict" and would announce this to Serbia; but he refused to commit himself with respect to a Turkish or Bulgarian intervention.† Herr von Jagow, for his part, urged Greece to remain neutral, "even in the case of Bulgarian intervention."‡ The German Emperor then took a hand in the matter. Alarmed by rumors that the Greeks were collecting troops and munitions for a sudden attack on the Dardanelles,§ William appealed to King Constantine's "loyalty as a ruler and as colleague of mine" to abstain from a policy of adventure against Turkey.

> Turkey [he continued] desires to attach herself to the Triple Alliance and also to come to an understanding with Austria. She will thereby become of value to us and His Majesty ought not for a little personal reason fall upon a friend of the Triple Alliance who is valuable for me, if the latter is willing to side with Austria *against the Slavs.* On the contrary, His Majesty must range *himself* on the side of Austria, [otherwise my friendship will cease].‖

King Constantine sent a long personal telegram in reply. He denied that an attack on the Dardanelles or any other place was being considered; he affirmed that "we do not want war" and

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* The Austro-Hungarian minister in Athens thought the "sympathy of M. Venizelos for Serbia purely platonic and not very deep." Szilassy to Berchtold, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,779.

† Bassewitz to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 189. Two weeks before Streit had denied to the Austro-Hungarian minister that the Serbo-Greek treaty constituted a "general defensive alliance," and said that "in no case would the alliance be turned against the Monarchy." Szilassy to Berchtold, telegram, 13 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,228. He renewed this assurance on 25 July, and stated that "the Greek Government had energetically advised Belgrade to be conciliatory"; he went on to say that Greece "would be thankful if the decisions to be taken in Vienna could also take into consideration the advantages of the peaceful development of the Balkans." Szilassy to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,643.

‡ Theotoky to Streit, telegram, 25 July; Greek 13.

§ Wangenheim to foreign office, telegram, 22 July; *G. P.*, XXXVI, 842.

‖ Comment on Wangenheim's telegram; *G. P.*, XXXVI, 843. This was transmitted to the foreign office, and then sent to Athens. Jagow to Bassewitz, telegram, 25 July. According to the text given in Frangulis, I, 142, the words in brackets were omitted.

"we desire nothing from Turkey." On the main point of his brother-in-law's appeal, however, he said:

> I do not perceive how Turkey can help Austria without binding herself to Bulgaria. But if Bulgaria intervenes, then another Slav state in the Balkans will be increased in power, which would be especially dangerous to Turkey and to the non-Slav states and which would upset the Treaty of Bucharest and the equilibrium of the Balkans. This would be very dangerous to our interests; I think it would also run counter to German interests in the East, and in this case, I should not stand on the side of Austria *against* the Slavs, as Your Majesty's telegram puts it.*

In conformity with the King's attitude, the Greek Government joined with Rumania in notifying Bulgaria that they would not tolerate her intervention,† and the German Government was told that "the most elementary sentiment of self-preservation and security compels Greece not to tolerate an attack on Serbia by Bulgaria in order to reopen questions which have already been settled by the Treaty of Bucharest."‡

M. Venizelos was duly informed of the exchange of royal telegrams.§ It is not surprising that he decided to return to Athens, in spite of urgent representations from the King and M. Streit not to do so, "as he is misinformed as to [the] situation."|| Before leaving Munich, he sent a long message to the foreign minister:

> If we can remain neutral in a war limited to Serbia and Austria, we should not forget that our alliance requires us to mobilize 40,000 men immediately. It is, however, in the common interest of Serbia and Greece not to proceed at once to such a step, which might provoke the general mobilization of Bulgaria

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* Constantine to William II, in telegram from Bassewitz to foreign office, 27 July; G 243. On the same day, Berchtold requested the Greek Government "to undertake nothing which might jeopardize the localization of an eventual war." Berchtold to Szilassy, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,777.

† Erskine to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 224. See above, p. 443.

‡ Streit to Theotoky, telegram, 28 July; Greek 16.

§ Streit to Venizelos, telegram, 27 July; Frangulis, I, 142–144.

|| Erskine to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 222.

> and involve the great danger of precipitating serious events. . . . Please give Serbia the renewed assurance of our firm determination to mobilize without delay in the event of Bulgarian mobilization. . . .
>
> It is also necessary to consider the possibility that the war will become general, in order to determine our policy in advance. My well considered opinion is that in this eventuality the Royal Government could not at any price be induced to range itself with the camp opposed to Serbia and to co-operate with it against her enemies; this would be altogether contrary to the vital interests of Greece, to the sanctity of treaties and to the dignity of the state. Under no pretext shall I depart from this policy.*

These two paragraphs explain succinctly the policy adopted by the Greek Government: in the Austro-Serbian conflict, it proclaimed neutrality, which was a gain for the Central Powers; but it refused to join the latter group, in spite of considerable pressure.

On 31 July the German Emperor replied to the telegram sent by the King of the Hellenes in answer to his first message. He assured Constantine that neither Turkey nor Bulgaria would be "allowed" to intervene in the Austro-Serbian conflict, and then continued:

> If it comes to a general European conflagration, not only these but all the Balkan states will have to make their choice. I take it as a matter of course that the memory of Your murdered father will keep You and Greece from taking the part of the Serbian assassins against My person and the Triple Alliance. But even from the point of pure advantage to the interests of Greece, it seems to Me that the place for Your country and Your dynasty is on the side of the Triple Alliance.

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* Venizelos to Streit, telegram, from Munich, 29 July; Greek 17. Berchtold conveyed to Athens his "firm conviction that Bulgaria would remain strictly neutral." Berchtold to Szilassy, telegram, 29 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,935. The Bulgarian minister in Athens gave a similar assurance. Szilassy to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,019. Berchtold also promised that activity by Bulgarian bands (see above, p. 442) would be directed only against Serbia, "in no case against Greece." Berchtold to Szilassy, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,115. The Austro-Hungarian minister went so far as to suggest as his personal opinion that "Greece might receive part of Serbia" and found Streit "receptive." Szilassy to Berchtold, telegram, 30 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,017.

> Serbia herself, which cannot be saved from her fate even by Greek assistance, will recognize that it is *force majeure* which determines the attitude of Greece. No one had looked upon the remarkable rise of Greece under Your leadership with more envious eyes than Russia. Never will a better opportunity than at present be afforded Greece, under the powerful shield of the Triple Alliance, to cast off the ascendancy which Russia is striving for over the Balkans.
>
> Should You, contrary to My confident expectations, align yourself on the side of the enemy, Greece will be immediately exposed to the attack of Italy, Bulgaria and Turkey, and also Our personal relations would probably suffer forever as a result.*

It was the same kind of threat that M. Sazonov addressed to Bulgaria, and it had as much effect. After three days Constantine replied:

> It has never been our intention to help the Serbs. But it also does not seem to me possible for us to associate with their enemies and to fall upon them, since they are after all our allies. It seems to me that the interests of Greece demand her absolute neutrality and the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans as established by the Treaty of Bucharest. . . . These considerations force us to maintain neutrality and also to do everything possible in union with Rumania to restrain Bulgaria from intervention. You know what I think about the Slavs and the Russian ascendancy over the Balkans. This way of thinking is shared by my whole people, and if Bulgaria were to secure a great increase of power, the equilibrium in our part of the world would be destroyed and the Slav ascendancy simply assured.†

William II was most indignant at this message. He ordered Athens to be informed that "I have made an alliance with Bulgaria and Turkey for the war against Russia and will treat Greece as an enemy in case she does not join us at once." He himself told this to the Greek minister in Berlin,* and through him appealed to Constantine "as a comrade, as a German marshal, . . . and as a brother-in-law," with a reminder that through him Greece had obtained Kavalla definitively, "to be pleased to order the mobilization of his army, to place himself at the side of the Emperor, and to march together, hand in hand, against the common enemy Slavism." If, he continued, Greece did not do this, "then there will be a complete break between Greece and the Empire."† The Greek minister, after the manner of the Bulgarian minister in St. Petersburg, besought his sovereign, "to weigh in a most careful manner the immense consequences, for the present and for the future, which a refusal on our part to accede to the appeal of the Emperor would entail."‡ Nevertheless, King Constantine sent a refusal:

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* William II to Constantine, in telegram from Jagow to Bassewitz, 31 July; G 504, 466.

† Constantine to William II, in telegram of Bassewitz to foreign office, 2 August; G 702.

> The Emperor knows that my personal sympathies and my political views draw me to his side. I shall never forget that it is to him that we owe Kavalla. After mature reflection, however, it is impossible for me to see how I could be useful to him, if I mobilized my army immediately. The Mediterranean is at the mercy of the united fleets of England and France. . . . Without being able to be useful to him in anything, we should be wiped off the map. I am compelled to think that neutrality is forced upon us. . . .§

The German Government had to be content with Greek neutrality, even though it continued to urge Greece to come to an understanding with Turkey and Bulgaria.||

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* Comment on G 702.

† Theotoky to Constantine, telegram, 4 August; Greek 19.

‡ Theotoky to Constantine, telegram, 4 August; Greek 20. Jagow tried to reassure Theotoky by saying that "he did not think that England would act against us."

§ Streit to Theotoky, telegram, 7 August; Greek 21. Constantine told the chief of the British naval mission in Greece that "he was indignant at the [German Emperor's] interference in his country's affairs," but "to stop such telegrams coming in daily, he determined to send on this occasion a sympathetic answer." Admiral M. Kerr, in *Times* (London), 9 December, 1920.

|| Theotoky to Streit, telegrams, 7, 9, 11 August; Streit to Theotoky, telegram, 12 August; Greek 22–25.

Having proclaimed the neutrality of Greece, M. Venizelos was constrained to allow coal to be sent to the *Goeben* and the *Breslau,* on the ground that war-ships of the Entente Powers had already been revictualled in Greece.* But his sympathies were with the latter group, and on 14 August he inquired of the British, French and Russian Governments "if Greece would be considered an ally by the Powers of the Entente in case she attacked Bulgaria if the latter attacked Serbia." The response was not encouraging: Great Britain replied that Greece should remain neutral as long as Turkey was neutral; and the other Entente Powers did not answer. So on 18 August, M. Venizelos offered all the military and naval forces of Greece to the Entente without restriction or conditions.† But the British Government feared that "an alliance with Greece meant immediate war with Turkey and possibly Bulgaria" and was "anxious above all things not to foster a Greek enterprise against Constantinople in such a way as to give offence to Russia."‡ Russia, in fact, showed no enthusiasm for the idea, merely expressing "her lively satisfaction and her sincere thanks," and doing nothing to give the plan reality. This ended the matter, and Greece made no further effort to join in the war until the spring of 1915.

MONTENEGRO

In spite of the blood kinship of Serbia and Montenegro, the relations between the two governments often left much to be desired. King Nicholas of Montenegro was jealous of the greater power and prestige of Serbia; he was a constant fisher in troubled waters, and while he was accustomed to receive Russian subsidies, he often cultivated the good-will of Austria-

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* S. Cosmin, *L'Entente et la Grèce pendant la guerre mondiale* (Paris, 1926), I, 22.

† *Ibid.*, I, 23–24; Frangulis, I, 152–153. According to the French minister in Athens, Venizelos offered to take sides with the Entente Powers "*à titre gracieux*"; the minister explained Constantine's consent to this *démarche* by the fact that "he was still laboring under the impression that a new war with Turkey was threatened." G. Deville, *L'Entente, la Grèce et la Bulgarie* (Paris, 1919), p. 119.

‡ Churchill, p. 486; American edition, p. 530.

Hungary, which made him suspected in Belgrade. He had not been at all enthusiastic for the Serbo-Montenegrin union proposed in the spring of 1914, which was viewed with great hostility by the Cabinet of Vienna, and, for some reason or other, the Russian subsidy for 1914 had not been paid.[*] In view of the King's ill-humor, the Austro-Hungarian Government appears to have hoped that Montenegro might be detached from Serbia.[†] Count Berchtold stated that in Vienna they "knew very well how to distinguish between Serbia and Montenegro" and that "no clue of the crime of 28 June led to Montenegro";[‡] he was convinced, he said, that "Montenegro would dissociate herself from the tendencies which had led to the events of 28 June."[§] The King and his foreign minister professed to be "greatly pleased" with this recognition, but said that "Montenegro might be forced by public opinion, altogether against the King's will, to take part, in the event of a war between the Monarchy and Serbia."[||] They were willing, they hinted, to observe neutrality "in case Austria-Hungary promised concessions to Montenegro,"[¶] by which they doubtless meant the acquisition of Scutari and Albanian territory to the Boyana or even the Drin river.[**]

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[*] Salis to Grey, 23 July; B 651.

[†] Montenegrin sentiment toward the murder at Sarajevo seems to have been much like that of Serbia. Egger to Berchtold, 4 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,044. In spite of the King's prohibition, an anti-Austrian demonstration took place before the Austrian legation on 6 July; Nicholas himself helped to disperse the crowd. Egger to Berchtold, telegram, 5 July; Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 6 July, and despatch, 8 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,061, 10,079, 10,131. The King was so Austrophile that he visited the Austro-Hungarian legation and left his card. Egger to Berchtold, private, 5 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,062.

[‡] Mehmedbashich, one of the Sarajevo conspirators, escaped to Montenegro, where he was arrested at the request of Vienna. The Austro-Hungarian Government demanded his extradition, but he managed to escape from his Montenegrin captors, for which profuse apologies and not altogether convincing explanations were offered by the Montenegrin foreign minister. *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,241, 10,279, 10,329, 10,381, 10,404, 10,487, 10,666, 10,669.

[§] Berchtold to Otto, 20 July, and telegram, 23 July; A I 31–4, 69.

[||] Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 24 July; A II 20.

[¶] Hubka, military attaché, to Conrad, telegram, 24 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,595. Conrad commented: "Don't spare money." He also suggested guaranteeing the King the possession of his throne and support for "the further free economic development of his country. Note of Conrad, 25 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,702.

[**] Otto to Berchtold, 22 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,486. "The danger of a union with Serbia would be thereby allayed, and at the same time the Monarchy would secure

The prospects for a bargain were, however, not very auspicious, for the ministers, so the Austro-Hungarian representative had to report, "are agitating for solidarity with Serbia in the event of war," and reinforcements were being sent to the Albanian frontier, "on the pretext of having to protect Serbia from an Albanian attack on her rear."* Count Berchtold sought to stem the tide by assuring King Nicholas of his "benevolent disposition" toward Montenegro and promising that "at the proper moment we should surely take account of the interests of Montenegro, whose existence and extension as an independent state we have very much at heart."† He also requested Berlin "to do its best to induce King Nicholas and the Montenegrin Government to observe neutrality."‡ The German chargé was instructed accordingly, and was empowered to say that "Austria-Hungary is ready to yield to the King's desires with respect to the consolidation of his dynasty and the progress of his country."§

Such steps were futile. King Nicholas assured the Prince Regent of Serbia that "Montenegro is united with Servia for the defense of the Serb race" and that "my Montenegrins are on frontier prepared to fall in defense of our independence."‖ The council of ministers decided that in the event of war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, "Montenegro would take a position for defending herself and eventually go to the assistance of the Serbian army."¶ Mobilization was or-

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one friend among its neighbors on the southern frontier on whom it could unconditionally count, because this would be synonymous with its [Montenegro's] interests."

* Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 25 July; A II 43. The German chargé was told that "both king and government, even if they wished to remain neutral, would probably be forced by public opinion to intervene as soon as Austria invaded Serbia." Zech to foreign office, telegram, 25 July; G 195.

† Berchtold to Otto, telegram, 27 July; A II 76. He asked his minister to ascercertain and report what Montenegro desired. Berchtold to Otto, telegram, 27 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,800.

‡ Szögyény to German foreign office, 28 July; G 306. A similar request was made of Rome. Berchtold to Mérey, telegram, 26 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,744

§ Jagow to Zech, telegram, 28 July; G 322.

‖ Salis to Grey, telegram, 27 July; B 255.

¶ Zech to foreign office, telegram, 28 July; G 358. The Montenegrin foreign minister remarked to the Austrian minister that if, after the conciliatory Serbian reply, the Monarchy resorted to the *ultima ratio*, "this would create in Europe generally dered on 28 July,* and the Skupshtina was summoned for 31 July. The King struggled against the current by asking for assurances that "the war against Serbia was not a war of conquest" and for the "promise of such an enlargement of Montenegro as would enable it to exist in full self-respect and independence by the side of the other Balkan states, especially Serbia, without the foreign support hitherto necessary."† Count Berchtold did offer certain concessions:

> No territorial acquisitions by us in Serbia, protection of the independence of Montenegro, adequate financial support, besides an increase of territory. . . . No obstacles will be put in the way to an increase of territory in the direction of the Sandjak of Novi Bazar, and eventually Montenegro's wishes in respect of Albania—within the limits of our agreement with Italy—will meet with a thoroughly benevolent consideration on our part.‡

But, apart from the fact that no confidence was placed in promises of Vienna,§ Count Berchtold's offer was received only after the Skupshtina had voted a resolution, proposed by the opposition, according to which Montenegro was to enter the war in order to help her Serbian brethren.‖ The

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the impression that we [Austria-Hungary] desired war," and he expressed the hope that the Monarchy would not "reject the hand thrust forward." Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,882.

* Salis to Grey, telegram, 29 July; B 292. Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 21.

† Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 29 July; A III 22.

‡ Berchtold to Otto, telegram, 31 July; A III 76. The German Government was informed of these promises. Tschirschky to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 567.

§ The foreign minister said that "he would give nothing for the promises of Austria; they had been made for thirty-five [years], but had never been kept." Zech to foreign office, telegram, 30 July; G 476.

‖ Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; A III 77. While Berchtold was trying to keep Montenegro neutral, the Austro-Hungarian military authorities, who were carrying through the partial mobilization ordered on 25 July, expelled the Montenegrin residents of Cattaro, a town very close to the Dalmatian-Montenegrin frontier, and broke off telegraphic communication between Cattaro and Cetinje, so that the Austrian minister had to send his telegrams by messenger from Cetinje to Cattaro. The Montenegrin Government protested vigorously against such proceedings, and Berchtold promised redress. *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,801, 10,886, 10,958, 11,048, 11,052, 11,145. These incidents probably had little effect on the course of events, for even the Montenegrin foreign minister finally declared that a declaration of neutrality would be valid "only so long as Russia remained neutral." Otto to Berchtold, telegram, 31 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 11,147.

further action of the Skupshtina in giving the government "a free hand" seemed to leave the matter unsettled, to be determined by the "progress of events."* But as King Nicholas was pursuing a personal policy disliked by his people, the odds were greatly against him, and on 5 August the Austro-Hungarian minister in Cetinje was presented with a declaration of war against the Monarchy.†

THE SMALL STATES

If the Balkan states were either drawn into the war or able only to observe a precarious neutrality, the other small nations of Europe were genuinely anxious to keep out of the conflict and did not hesitate, with two exceptions, to proclaim their neutrality promptly. The only small Power whose course appears to have been doubtful was Sweden. In her case, the somewhat meagre evidence available suggests that she considered joining the Central Powers and that Germany would have been quite willing for her to do so. As early as 23 July instructions were sent to the German minister in Stockholm which pointed out that Russian intervention in the Austro-Serbian conflict would involve Germany and closed with this hint:

> If in spite of our efforts to keep it localized it should come to a general conflagration, we hope that Sweden will understand clearly what a serious hour has come for her destiny also.‡

Two days later William II expressed the wish that in the event of the situation between Germany and Russia becoming acute, "confidential inquiries should be immediately addressed to Denmark and Sweden,"* and on the evening of 28 July, that is, after the declaration of war against Serbia, Herr von Jagow telegraphed to Stockholm that "Swedish declaration of neutrality would probably make more difficult any change of Sweden's attitude later."† Finally, on 30 July, the German chancellor used even more pointed language:

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* Zech to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 622. According to the Bulgarian minister in Rome, "Italy was trying to influence the King of Montenegro to remain neutral." Rizov to Radoslavov, 31 July; *KSF*, VI, 251. For Italian concern over Mount Lovchen, see above, I, 410.

† Otto to Berchtold, telegram, from Gravosa, 6 August; A III 158.

‡ Jagow to Reichenau, telegram, 23 July; G 123. Berchtold, when instructing his minister in Stockholm to explain the Austro-Hungarian action against Serbia, remarked: "An adherence of Sweden to the Triple Alliance would impose too far-reaching obligations upon us, but I cannot conceal from myself the fact that at the outbreak of a European war, a natural identity of interests would immediately arise between Sweden and the Powers of the Triple Alliance." He suggested that the minister should get in touch with Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish explorer and publicist, who was notoriously anti-Russian, and "call his attention to the dangers of the aggressive plans of Russia." Berchtold to Hadik, private, 22 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,504.

> We have reason to assume that England will very quickly take part in the war on the side of the Dual Alliance. Reservation of freedom of action in Swedish declaration of neutrality for the case of English intervention therefore urgently necessary.‡

One wonders if some kind of understanding existed between Germany and Sweden which has not been revealed.§

The possibility of this being the case is strengthened by the language used by the Swedish minister of foreign affairs to the British minister in Stockholm. On 2 August Mr. Howard asked Herr Wallenberg for "categorical assurances regarding neutrality." The Swedish minister replied that "Sweden was determined to maintain neutrality as long as possible," but "he greatly feared that if Great Britain joined Russia Sweden would be forced to take other side"; when asked if Sweden would resist a German violation of neutrality, "he merely repeated that if England took part in war Sweden would have to do so."* On the following day he modified his statement somewhat:

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* Wedel to foreign office, telegram, from Balestrand, 25 July; G 173.

† Jagow to Reichenau, telegram, "secret," 28 July; G 319.

‡ Bethmann-Hollweg to Reichenau, telegram, 30 July; G 406. After the declaration of war against Russia, the information was sent to Stockholm that Russia would leave only one corps in Finland. Jagow to Reichenau, telegram, 1 August; G 552.

§ Or, if no understanding existed, Germany was trying to win over Sweden to her side. "The sympathies of the Swedish Government are with the Triple Alliance and the German Government is endeavoring to persuade Sweden to attack Russia in case of a war between Russia and Germany. The present Conservative Government, however, is a minority government and it is my opinion that such a war would not be popular with the mass of the Swedish people." Caffery to Bryan, 31 July; US, p. 88. The Austro-Hungarian minister quoted the Swedish foreign minister as saying that while Sweden would not join with Russia, "too vehement pressure on the part of Germany to induce Sweden to adhere to the Triple Alliance . . . might irritate public opinion and produce the opposite effect." Hadik to Berchtold, telegram, 28 July; *Ö.-U. A.*, 10,927.

> 1. If England did not go to war, he was positive that Sweden's neutrality could be maintained.
> 2. If England did go to war, he feared that extreme circumstances might arise which would force Sweden to choose one side or the other, and it was his private opinion, considering public opinion here, that it was impossible for Sweden to fight on the same side as Russia.†

None the less it is interesting to note that the King of Sweden was said to have declared to the German minister that "in the event of a European war Sweden would place herself on the side of the Triple Alliance";‡ that the German ambassador in Constantinople was reported to have told the grand vizier that "Sweden would also be found on their side";§ that Count Berchtold on 3 August assured General Conrad that "Sweden had promised active intervention against Russia";|| and that on 4 August Herr von Jagow sent word to Stockholm that the British ambassador has asked for his passports.¶ What really lay back of the German activity and the Swedish minister's language remains, however, a mystery. The British Government was sufficiently exercised to propose to France and Russia that the three Powers should "guarantee to respect the integrity and independence of Sweden now and hereafter if the latter remains neutral during the war."** But this was not necessary, for before it could be acted upon, Sweden declared her neutrality.†† To insure respect for her neutrality, partial

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* Howard to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 511.

† Howard to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 570.

‡ Sazonov to Nekludov, telegram, 1 August; R, 1925 154.

§ Bax-Ironside to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 564.

|| Conrad, IV, 171.

¶ Jagow to Reichenau, telegram, 4 August; G 843.

**Grey to Bertie and Buchanan, telegrams, 4 August; B 576.

†† Howard to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 627. "A friend who saw the King this morning told me His Majesty and the Swedish Government are fully determined to maintain their neutrality to the utmost." Howard to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 633.

mobilization began on 2 August* and was gradually extended.†

From the beginning of the crisis Denmark had determined upon an attitude of strict neutrality, "whatever turn events might take." The foreign minister said, however, that

> the attitude of Great Britain was of paramount importance to this country, and, provided that the strict neutrality of Great Britain were assured, he did not anticipate trouble for Denmark in the event of a European war.
>
> Were the contrary the case the geographical position of Denmark would bring her within the danger zone, which caused some feeling of apprehension while the political outlook was uncertain.‡

Presumably this apprehension was based on the fear that the presence of British men-of-war in the waters surrounding Denmark would create complications with Germany or even that Great Britain might attempt to seize Danish ports for bases of operations against Germany. On 31 July the Danish Government decided to call up 1,400 men for the fleet and 1,300 for the seacoast fortifications.§ On the following day it decided to add 18,000 men to the army, which would give the country a force of 30,000; the foreign minister explained that "it was being definitely stated here that Germany was mobilizing," but he added that the troops would not be concentrated on the frontier.‖ The fear of German pressure was evidently groundless, for the German Government declared that

> we did not intend—so long as Denmark did or could maintain her neutrality—to include Danish territory or Danish waters in our operations of war (provided our opponents did not do

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* Howard to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 552.

† Howard to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 599.

‡ Lowther to Grey, 29 July; B 646.

§ Rantzau to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 532. Lowther to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 444.

‖ Rantzau to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 616. Danish legation to German foreign office, 2 August; G 724. Cf. Castenkiold to Grey, 3 August; B 530.

so), and that, furthermore, we had no intention of infringing upon the existence of the Danish state.*

Rumors circulated in Copenhagen that Great Britain had been giving assurances to Denmark in the event of war with Germany, but the Danish foreign minister denied absolutely that any *démarche* of this kind had been made by either Great Britain or Russia;† there is, in fact, no evidence of any British or Russian communication to Denmark. The Danish Government proclaimed its neutrality on 4 August.‡

The Norwegian proclamation of neutrality in the Austro-Serbian war was issued after consultation with the Swedish and Danish Governments; it was in fact identic with the Danish proclamation.§ It was followed by the mobilization of the navy and the strengthening of the garrisons in the fortresses.‖ Finally, neutrality was proclaimed in the general war.

The position of Holland was not an enviable one, for on the one hand its province of Limburg lay athwart the German road into Belgium, while on the other its possession of the mouths of the Scheldt might create complications with Belgium and Great Britain. At first the Dutch Government was "rather inclined to be optimistic" about the European crisis,¶ but on 28 July it stopped all leave in the army and navy, began preparations for mobilization (if necessary), and commenced to move troops.** The bridge at Deventer, on the main line to

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* Memorandum of Jagow, 31 July; G 494. Jagow advised Denmark "to protect her harbors, etc., against occupation by either the British or the Russian fleets."

† Rantzau to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 846.

‡ Rantzau to foreign office, telegram, 4 August; G 755.

§ Findlay to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 475. The government seemed to fear that the solidarity of the Scandinavian states might not be permanent. At any rate the Norwegian minister in Stockholm told the Swedish foreign minister that "Norway would go with Sweden as long as it was in any way possible, and that, if their paths had to diverge, the two countries would in no circumstances use their arms against each other." Reichenau to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 692.

‖ Oberndorff to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 789. Findlay to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 504.

¶ Chilton to Grey, 27 July; B 195.

** Chilton to Grey, telegram, 28 July; B 213.

Berlin, was placed in the hands of engineers provided with explosives.* The forts along the seacoast were fully manned, and the coast guard was called out;† foreign men-of-war were forbidden to enter Dutch territorial waters,‡ and all buoys and beacons were removed.§ Finally, on 31 July, 'danger of war' was declared and the minister of war was authorized to call out all levies of the army, navy and reserve.|| In notifying this last step to Great Britain, the Dutch Government stated that it was taken "in order to maintain, if the case arose, the neutrality of its territory by all the means at its disposal,"¶ and the British minister at The Hague was informed that "Dutch troops on German frontier are being heavily reinforced and that they will fire on Germans the moment they cross."** As further precautions the Northern Estuaries and Goeree Estuary were mined.†† Holland did not propose to take any chances.

Actually, the country was not in danger. General von Moltke had, as has been seen, abandoned the scheme of his predecessor for marching across Limburg,‡‡ perhaps because the Dutch had given ample indication of their intention to defend their territory. On 2 August the German minister at The Hague was instructed to communicate to the Dutch Government the ultimatum addressed to Belgium, and to say that

> the Imperial Government is definitely counting on the Netherlands observing a benevolent neutrality toward Germany, which will further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries. On this condition the neutrality of the Netherlands will be fully respected by Germany.§§

The Dutch Government received the communication with

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* Chilton to Grey, 29 July; B 323.

† Chilton to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 330.

‡ Chilton to Grey, telegram, 30 July; B 297.

§ Chilton to Grey, 30 July; B 325.

|| Chilton to Grey, telegram, 31 July; B 354. Müller to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 516.

¶ Marees van Swinderen to Grey, 1 August; B 408.

** Chilton to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 478.

†† Chilton to Grey, telegram, 2 August; B 462. Müller to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 727.

‡‡ See above, p. 149.

§§ Jagow to Müller, telegram, 2 August; G 674.

thanks, but made no comment.* If instead of this assurance, Germany had presented an ultimatum, a reply similar to that of Belgium would have been given.†

The British Government seems to have feared that Holland was likely to be treated in the same way as Belgium. On 4 August Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to The Hague:

> If pressure is applied to them [the Dutch Government] by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and His Majesty's Government will support them in offering such resistance, and His Majesty's Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering . . . at once common action for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.‡

The proposal was presently cancelled,§ because it was learned that Germany had promised to respect the neutrality of Holland,|| but not before the British minister at The Hague had communicated it to the Dutch Government. The Dutch foreign office "regretted communication must be cancelled, as it was an agreeable one."¶ So it was renewed on the following day, in a modified form. Referring to the appeal of Belgium to the Entente Powers, Sir Edward Grey said:

> His Majesty's Government believe that the issue involves in

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* Müller to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 738. The German Government transmitted to The Hague the story that eighty French officers in Prussian uniforms had tried to cross the German frontier at Walbeck (see above, p. 368). Jagow to Müller, telegram, 2 August; G 677. The Dutch foreign minister replied that nothing was known of any such incident. "All the roads were closed, all automobiles were stopped and inspected, and of those so far stopped only Dutch cars with Dutch occupants have been met with." Müller to foreign office, telegram, 3 August; G 797.

† Chilton to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 604.

‡ Grey to Chilton, telegram, 4 August; B 580. Similar instructions were sent to Brussels (see above, p. 402) and to Christiania. France and Russia were asked to associate themselves with this proposal. Grey to Bertie and Buchanan, telegrams, 4 August; B 578.

§ Grey to Chilton, telegram, 4 August; B 593.

|| Grey to Chilton, 4 August; B 639. Marees van Swinderen to Grey, 3 August, received 4 August; B 595.

¶ Chilton to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 632.

> effect the separate existence in full independence, not only of Belgium, but of other neighbouring States.
>
> In this issue His Majesty's Government would be glad to join in common action with Netherlands Government, with the object of securing the full independence, liberty, and integrity of every State that will join in common action to defend itself.
>
> His Majesty's Government believe that on the result of this war depends the question whether Great Britain, France, and all the countries bordering on the North Sea shall maintain their existence as before this war.*

The answer of the Dutch Government has not been published. Since its neutrality was not actually threatened or violated, it may have felt that it had no occasion to reply. But the Dutch army was brought to its full war strength.

Switzerland, like the other small states, was "extremely anxious" as to its position in the event of a European conflict.† In the opinion of the British minister in Berne, there was no question that "this country will strictly maintain her neutrality but any infringement of her frontier will be met by armed force."‡ Consequently, on 31 July, the Federal Council decided on mobilization of the army, the first day of mobilization to be 3 August.§ The only incident of the crisis appears to have been the use by a German patrol of a road lying on Swiss territory between Liaottendorf (in Alsace) and Pfetterhausen, in the belief that it had been internationalized; the Swiss Government protested,‖ and Germany promptly apologized.¶ So far as is known, no Power contemplated violating the neutrality of Switzerland, or endeavored to drag it into the war.

About Spain little is known. On 1 August the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was informed that Spain would observe "an absolute neutrality" in the war* and this was subsequently proclaimed. But King Alfonso expressed his "lively sympathy for France," who, he said, "was going to defend the independence of the Latin nations and, consequently, of Spain."†

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* Grey to Chilton, telegram, 5 August; B 656. Sent also to Norway.

† Memorandum of Nicolson, 27 July; B 172.

‡ Grant Duff to Grey, 29 July; B 324.

§ Romberg to foreign office, telegram, 31 July; G 509. Grant Duff to Grey, telegram, 1 August; B 431. Carlin to Grey, 1 August; B 443.

‖ Romberg to foreign office, telegram, 2 August; G 681.

¶ Jagow to Romberg, telegram, 2 August; G 701.

Since the fourteenth century, Portugal had been the ally of Great Britain, and the treaty had been renewed in 1899.‡ On 1 August the Portuguese premier informed the German journalists in Lisbon that "there was no doubt that Portugal would fulfil the obligations of her alliance with England";§ two days later he told the Austro-Hungarian minister that Portugal "hoped to remain neutral, but that she had an alliance with Great Britain which she could not ignore."|| Consequently, he formally assured the British Government of "Portugal's intention and desire to act in complete co-operation with Great Britain in whatever course latter may adopt."¶ To this overture Sir Edward Grey replied that "in case of attack by Germany on any Portuguese possession, His Majesty's Government will consider themselves bound by the stipulations of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance," but that for the present, they "would be satisfied if the Portuguese Government refrained from proclaiming neutrality."** This course was followed. On 7 August, at a special session of the national congress, the leaders of the various parties proclaimed the solidarity of Portugal with Great Britain and passed a resolution conferring full powers on the government.†† For the moment neutrality was observed, but before the end of the year Portuguese troops took part in military operations in Africa against Germany.

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* Ratibor to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 615. The German Emperor commented: "Then she ought not to permit troops from Morocco to be transported through Spain."

† Poincaré, IV, 540.

‡ *B. D.*, I, 93–94.

§ Rosen to foreign office, telegram, 1 August; G 617.

|| Carnegie to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 565.

¶ Carnegie to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 601.

** Grey to Carnegie, telegram, 4 August; B 610.

†† Bailey to Bryan, 10 August; US, pp. 76–77.

Apart from Belgium, Portugal was the only small western European state to become involved in the war.

Austria-Hungary and the Western Powers

Although there were no points at issue between Austria-Hungary on the one side and France and Great Britain on the other, it would have been anomalous and even inconvenient for them to remain at peace with each other. Nevertheless, the actual rupture was delayed for a week after the war had become general. On 4 August Admiral von Tirpitz declared that it was imperative for Austria-Hungary to declare war on the Powers of the Entente, in order that the Austro-Hungarian fleet might assist the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*,* and an urgent request that this be done was transmitted to Vienna.† The Cabinet of Vienna did not act immediately. Count Berchtold, who had been informed that Great Britain saw no reason for conflict with the Monarchy "so long as we are not in a state of war with France,"‡ pointed out to Berlin that "Austria-Hungary certainly had a great interest in not exposing its fleet uselessly to destruction and in preventing English or French landings on the Dalmatian coast"; he declared his willingness, however, to go to war with England "as soon as our navy has completed its preparations,"§ which he estimated would require four or five days.‖ Another factor in the situation was that General Conrad had conceived the notion of sending the Austro-Hungarian fleet to Constantinople as a means of influencing Turkey and Bulgaria, and asked for a delay of three days.¶ The commander of the fleet objected to such an expedition, as the fleet was not ready, and the project was dropped; but Conrad continued to hold out against a declaration of war or even a recall of the ambassador in Paris, which Berchtold suggested as a compromise.* Meanwhile, the German Government had consented to a postponement of action until 12 August.†

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* Tirpitz to Jagow, 4 August; G 871.

† Jagow to Tschirschky, telegram, 5 August; G 874. Szögyény to Berchtold, telegram, 5 August; A III 138.

‡ Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram, 4 August; A III 131. Grey to Bunsen, telegram, 4 August; B 618.

§ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 5 August; A III 135.

‖ Berchtold to Szögyény, telegram, 6 August; A III 151. Berchtold asked the permission of Francis Joseph "in principle" to issue the declarations of war "as soon as this seems advisable to the high command of the army." Berchtold to Francis Joseph, 5 August; A III 147.

¶ Conrad, IV, 174. Berchtold agreed, and telegraphed to Constantinople for permission for the Austro-Hungarian fleet to pass the Dardanelles.

In the end, the initiative was taken by France. As early as 4 August the Quai d'Orsay inquired if the news were true that "Austro-Hungarian troops have been ordered to move toward the French frontier,"‡ and the question was repeated several days later.§ Count Berchtold replied that the rumors were "an absolute invention."‖ The French, convinced by secret reports that the Innsbruck corps had been sent to Alsace, asked for assurances that "no Austro-Hungarian troops had been sent from Austrian territory toward the west": which Count Berchtold promptly gave.¶ As both Russia and the French ambassador in Constantinople were pressing the French Government to regularize the situation, the foreign minister sent for the Austro-Hungarian ambassador and announced to him the recall of the French ambassador in Vienna, since the undoubted fact of Austro-Hungarian troops being in German territory "constituted military assistance to Germany."** Count Szécsen thereupon asked for his passports, and left Paris the same evening (10 August). On the following day, M. Dumaine called on Count Berchtold and announced the rupture of relations.†† The formal declaration of war was issued by France on 12 August.

The British Government did not propose to declare war on Austria-Hungary "unless some direct provocation is given, or she declares war on us";‡‡ but Sir Edward Grey pointed out to

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* *Ibid.*, IV, 177–180.

† Szögyény to Berchtold, telegrams, 6 August; A III 153, 154.

‡ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 4 August; A III 130.

§ Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 8 August; A III 164.

‖ Berchtold to Szécsen, telegrams, 9 August; A III 165, 166. On 6 August, however, the 30.5 cm. mortars were ordered sent to Germany; Conrad, IV, 192.

¶ Poincaré, V, 55–56.

** Szécsen to Berchtold, telegram, 10 August; A III 169. Poincaré, V, 57.

†† Memorandum of Berchtold, 11 August; A III 173.

‡‡ Grey to Rodd, telegram, 4 August; B 591.

Count Mensdorff that "we could not well collaborate with France in the Atlantic and not in the Mediterranean,"* and the ambassador understood that "if we enter upon a state of war with France, we shall also be at war with England."† It was agreed, however, that hostilities should not be begun without a formal declaration of war.‡ As Count Mensdorff, for military reasons, had to be deprived of the privilege of sending messages in code,§ his official usefulness was at an end. Finally, on 12 August, at the request of France the British Government notified Austria-Hungary that in view of the rupture between France and the Monarchy, a state of war existed between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain.|| Sir Edward Grey expressed to Count Mensdorff his personal sorrow at the course of events,¶ and at Vienna Sir Maurice de Bunsen and Count Berchtold separated from each other with mutual regret and esteem.** Neither France nor Great Britain had any desire for war with Austria-Hungary, but obviously if they were to fight Germany, they could not well remain at peace with her ally.

A retort was made by the Austro-Hungarian Government when on 27 August it declared war against Belgium. The declaration was based on the grounds that "Belgium, having refused to accept the proposals made to her on several occasions by Germany, is affording her military assistance to France and Great Britain, both of which Powers have declared war on Austria-Hungary," and that "Austrian and Hungarian nationals in Belgium have had to submit, under the very eyes of the Belgian authorities, to treatment contrary to the most primitive demands of humanity, and inadmissible even toward the

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* Mensdorff to Berchtold, 6 August; A III 156.

† Mensdorff to Berchtold, 7 August; A III 159.

‡ Berchtold to Mensdorff, telegram, 6 August; A III 155.

§ Grey to Mensdorff, 6 August; B 662.

|| Grey to Bunsen, 12 August; B 672. Mensdorff to Berchtold, telegram (text of notification), 12 August; A III 175.

¶ Grey to Mensdorff, 12 August; B 673. Mensdorff replied that "I highly appreciate and heartily reciprocate the friendly personal feelings." Mensdorff to Grey, 12 August; B 674.

** Memorandum of Berchtold, 12 August; A III 176. Bunsen to Grey, 1 September; B 676.

subjects of any enemy state."* The Belgium Government replied that "Germany herself has recognized that her attack constitutes a violation of international law, and, being unable to justify it, she has pleaded her strategical interests"; and it denied the charge that Austrian and Hungarian nationals had been maltreated, for it had issued "the strictest orders for the protection of Austro-Hungarian persons and property."†

These formal declarations of war between Austria-Hungary and the Western Powers had no great practical effect on the situation. This cannot be said, however, of the last rupture which has to be recorded—that between Germany and Japan.

JAPAN

Under the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, as revised in 1911, the signatories were pledged to "the consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India" and to "the maintenance of the territorial rights of the High Contracting Parties in the regions of Eastern Asia and of India, and the defence of their special interests in the said regions." They agreed, in Article I, that

> whenever, in the opinion of either Great Britain or Japan, any of the rights and interests referred to in the preamble of this Agreement are in jeopardy, the two Governments will communicate with one another fully and frankly, and will consider in common the measures which should be taken to safeguard those menaced rights or interests.

Article II read:

> If by reason of unprovoked attack or aggressive action, wherever arising, on the part of any Power or Powers, either High Contracting Party should be involved in war in defence of its territorial rights or special interests mentioned in the preamble of this Agreement, the other High Contracting Party

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* Berchtold to Clary, telegram, 27 August; A III 182.

† Davignon to Fallon, telegram, 29 August; Belgian I 78. On the latter point, cf. Davignon to Errembault de Dudzeele, telegrams, 12, 22 August; Errembault de Dudzeele to Davignon, 18 August; Belgian II 32, 35, 33.

> will at once come to the assistance of its ally, and will conduct the war in common, and make peace in mutual agreement with it.*

It would seem that Great Britain had the right to call upon Japan for assistance if its rights or interests in Eastern Asia and India were threatened by Germany.

At first the British Government hesitated to make such an appeal. On 1 August, Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to the British ambassador in Tokyo a report of what he had said to the Japanese ambassador in London:

> . . . the situation in Europe was very grave.
>
> We had not yet decided what our action should be, but under certain conditions we might find it necessary to intervene. If, however, we did intervene, it would be on the side of France and Russia, and I therefore did not see that we were likely to have to apply to Japan under our alliance, or that the interests dealt with by the alliance would be involved.†

Without, of course, being aware of this, the German Government on the same day made an approach to Japan. Since Russia had ordered the complete mobilization of her army and navy, war, it informed the German ambassador in Tokyo, was "practically inevitable," and, it continued:

> We are convinced that the Japanese Government, in proper appreciation of the great moment, will draw the conclusions which are indicated for Japan. Please express yourself, with due regard for Japanese neutrality, in this sense, and telegraph your impressions of Japan's intentions.‡

To this German overture, the Japanese foreign minister replied that "Japan desired to remain neutral as long as possible; her ultimate decision depended, as a matter of course, on England":

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* *British and Foreign State Papers* (London, 1912), CIV, 173–174.

† Grey to Greene, telegram, 1 August; B 436.

‡ Jagow to Rex, telegram, 1 August; G 545.

> If England laid claim to Japan's help in Eastern Asia or India, then Japan must intervene . . . he did not believe that encounters on the high seas would bring about the intervention of Japan, but this might well happen in the event of a German attack on British territory, *e. g.*, Hong Kong. As long as the war was limited to Europe, Japan would presumably remain neutral.

The German ambassador had the impression that Japan was "very friendly" to Russia, and that the latter was disposed to make concessions.* This answer to the German sounding was communicated to the British ambassador, who was also informed that

> the Imperial Government will await an intimation from His Majesty's Government as to what action they have decided to take before defining their own attitude, which will be based thereon.†

Officially, then, the Japanese action was to depend on the alliance with Great Britain; and almost at once the British Government did, in spite of its original disposition not to do so, appeal to Japan on the basis of the alliance.

On 3 August the foreign office decided, in reply to an inquiry of Sir Edward Grey "whether the present situation in any way affects the Japanese under the 1911 Agreement and whether we have anything to ask them," that "it might be as well to warn the Japanese Government that in the event of a war with Germany there might be a possibility of an attack upon Hong Kong or Wei-hai Wei when we should look to them for support."‡ A communication to this effect was accordingly sent to Tokyo.§ The Japanese foreign minister replied that "the question before him was so serious that he could not answer it on his own account," and referred the matter to the cabinet.* On the next day the Japanese answer was conveyed to the British ambassador:

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* Rex to foreign office, telegram, [?3 August]; G 785.

† Greene to Grey, telegram, 3 August; B 571.

‡ Note of Tyrrell, 3 August; B 534. Whether the admiralty had made representations to the foreign office is not known. Churchill, p. 292, American edition, p. 314, says: "No clause in the Anglo-Japanese Treaty entitled us to invoke the assistance of Japan." Tyrrell, at the end of his note, said that "perhaps under Article 1 of the agreement we should communicate with [the Japanese Government]"; he did not refer to Article 2.

§ Grey to Greene, telegram, 3 August; B 549.

> In the special eventualities referred to, namely:— An attack on Hong Kong and Wei-hai Wei or a similar concrete act of aggression the Imperial Government will be ready at once to support His Majesty's Government if called upon. . . . In the hypothetical cases, such as a capture of a British merchant ship or a case involving, perhaps, a question of Chinese or Russian territorial waters, the Imperial Government would wish to have the opportunity of considering it and consulting with His Majesty's Government before taking definite action.

The ambassador was also informed that a fleet of four large cruisers was ready for "immediate action" and that three other cruisers had been stationed in certain parts "to meet possible eventualities."† Sir Edward Grey returned cordial thanks for this "generous offer of assistance," and declared that while "we should avoid, if we could, drawing Japan into any trouble," yet "should a case arise in which we needed her help, we would gladly ask for it and be grateful for it."‡

Evidently "a case arose" very soon. According to the Japanese version, "on August 7 the British ambassador asked for an interview with Baron Kato and told the foreign minister that the situation had developed in such a manner as would oblige Japan's immediate entrance into the war." On the same evening, at a meeting of the cabinet and the 'elder statesmen,' the policy of Japan was "definitely formulated."§ But there was apparently no reluctance on the part of Japan to take a hand. Her chargé in Peking was "reliably quoted as stating that his Government would welcome an opportunity to participate in taking Kiaochow and that an expedition for that purpose is available immediately . . .";* and Sir Edward Grey informed the American ambassador in London that "Japan finds herself unable to refrain from war with Germany," adding, as an explanation, that "the German Ambassador at Tokyo has made further refraining impossible."†

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* K. K. Kawakami, *Japan and World Peace* (New York, 1919), p. 3; confirmed by Y. Ichihashi, *The Washington Conference and After* (Stanford University, Calif., 1928), p. 118, note, who says that he "is in possession of the Japanese documents which Kawakami analyzes."

† Greene to Grey, telegram, 4 August; B 637.

‡ Grey to Greene, 4 August; B 641.

§ Kawakami, pp. 3–4.

No evidence is available of what the German ambassador in Tokyo was doing. Possibly he was suggesting to the Japanese Government the neutralization of the Orient.‡ But obviously any activity on his part could have had little real effect on the policy of Japan. By 12 August the Japanese fleet was mobilizing,§ and on 15 August the Japanese Government addressed an ultimatum to Germany

> Considering it highly important and necessary in the present situation to take measures to remove all causes of disturbances to the peace of the Far East and to safeguard the general interests contemplated by the agreement of alliance between Japan and Great Britain . . . the Imperial Japanese Government sincerely believe it to be their duty to give advice|| to the Imperial German Government to carry out the following propositions:

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* MacMurray to Bryan, telegram, 11 August; US, p. 166.

† W. H. Page to Bryan, telegram, 11 August; US, pp. 167–168. The then American minister to China, who, however, was not in Peking at the moment, writes: "On August 8, 1914, Japanese war vessels appeared near Tsingtau. Japan suggested on August 10th that the British Government might call for the co-operation of Japan under the terms of the Alliance. In view of possible consequences the British Government hesitated to make the call; the British in China considered it important that independent action by Japan in that country should be precluded." P. S. Reinsch, *An American Diplomat in China* (Garden City, N. Y., 1922), p. 123. Ichihashi, p. 118, denies the accuracy of this statement; the American documents contain no reference to any Japanese suggestion of 10 August.

‡ Cf. Guthrie to Bryan, telegrams, 10 August, 11 August; US, pp. 165, 166. The American Government sounded the German Government on "the possibility of circumscribing the area of hostilities and maintaining the *status quo* in the Far East" (Bryan to Gerard, telegram, 11 August; US, p. 167), and received a reply that "Germany does not seek war with Japan," and was willing to abstain from attacking British colonies, war-ships, or commerce in the East in return for a corresponding promise from Great Britain (Gerard to Bryan, 13 August; US, pp. 169–170). This proposal was transmitted to Japan, but doubtless arrived too late, though it would probably not have been considered in any case.

§ Cotten to navy department, telegram, 12 August; US, p. 168.

|| In the German ultimatum to Japan of 23 April, 1895, similar language was used: "Germany therefore advises [*rät*] Japan to renounce definitively the possession of the [Liaotung] peninsula"; *G. P.*, IX, 278.

> (1) To withdraw immediately from the Japanese and Chinese waters German men-of-war and armed vessels of all kinds and to disarm at once those which cannot be so withdrawn.
>
> (2) To deliver on a date not later than September 15, 1914, to the Imperial Japanese authorities without condition or compensation the entire leased territory of Kiaochow, with a view to eventual restoration of the same to China.

If "an unconditional acceptance of the above advice" were not received by noon of 23 August, the Japanese Government would "be compelled to take such action as they may deem necessary to meet the situation."* The German chargé in Peking informally and unofficially, for he could not communicate with his government, suggested that Kiaochow might be returned directly to China; but Japan warned the Chinese Government "to discontinue such *pourparlers,*"† and the British minister stated that "his government could not now recognize such a transfer."‡ In the end, the German Government failed to make any reply to the Japanese ultimatum, and on 23 August Japan declared war on Germany. Japan informed Great Britain, who in turn informed the United States, that "she is anxious to respect both the neutrality and the integrity of China,"§ and both Powers gave the United States to understand that

> the action of Japan will not extend to the Pacific Ocean beyond the China Seas, except in so far as it may be necessary to protect Japanese shipping lines in the Pacific, nor beyond Asiatic waters westward of the China Seas, nor to any foreign territory except territory in German occupation on the continent of Eastern Asia.||

The German intervention against Japan in 1895 was the first occasion on which Germany displayed what William II later called "the mailed fist." The action of Japan was probably influenced to no small extent by the memory of that incident.

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* Guthrie to Bryan, telegram, 15 August; US, p. 170.
† MacMurray to Bryan, telegram, 19 August; US, p. 172.
‡ MacMurray to Bryan, telegram, 20 August; US, p. 173.
§ W. H. Page to Bryan, telegram, 11 August; US, p. 166.
|| Barclay to Bryan, 18 August; US, p. 171.

At first it seemed possible for Austria-Hungary not to become a party to the war in the Far East. Japan agreed that if the *Kaiserin Elisabeth,* then at Tsingtao, were disarmed and interned at Shanghai, diplomatic relations would not be broken,* but the Emperor Francis Joseph ordered his ship "to take up fight together with German navy,"† and the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was instructed to ask for his passports.‡ Loyalty to an alliance could not be carried further.

THE UNITED STATES AND MEDIATION

On 28 July the American ambassador in Paris cabled to President Wilson that the situation in Europe was regarded in Paris "as the gravest in history." In his personal opinion, an "expression from our nation would have great weight in this crisis":

> I believe that a strong plea for delay and moderation from the President of the United States would meet with the respect and approval of Europe and urge the prompt consideration of this question. This suggestion is consistent with our plea for arbitration and attitude toward world affairs generally. I would not appear officious but deem it my duty to make this expression to you.§

Shortly after the receipt of this appeal, the secretary of state inquired of the ambassador in London if there was "any likelihood that the good offices of the United States if offered under Article 3 of the Hague convention would be acceptable or serve any high purpose in the present crisis."|| The sounding was made only in London. Sir Edward Grey expressed "his great gratitude" for the suggestion, and said that he would be "only too delighted if any opportunity in which the good offices of

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* Guthrie to Bryan, telegrams, 24 August, 26 August; US, p. 176.

† Dumba to Bryan, telegram, 26 August; US, p. 177.

‡ Berchtold to Müller, 24 August; A III 180. Guthrie to Bryan, 29 August; US, p. 180.

§ Herrick to Bryan, telegram, for the President, 28 July, received 7.30 P. M.; US, pp. 18–19.

|| Bryan to W. H. Page, telegram, 28 July, 11.44 P. M.; US, p. 19. The offer was communicated to Grey on the following day. Page to Grey; B 259.

the United States could be used."* Thus encouraged, the President, who was "anxious to do everything in his power to avert war," then inquired "if there is the slightest intimation that such a suggestion might be effective elsewhere."† Evidently Mr. Wilson was unwilling to plunge uninvited into European politics, and wisely so. The reply from London was the reverse of encouraging. Ambassador Page telegraphed:

> My very definite opinion is that there is not the slightest chance of any result if our good offices be offered at any continental capital. This is confirmed by the judgment of the British Foreign Office. We may have a chance after the war has reached a breathing space.‡

President Wilson, however, did not wait for the war to reach a breathing space—which in fact it never reached. On the next day he despatched the following message to the heads of the five Great Powers then involved in the war:

> As official head of one of the powers signatory to the Hague convention, I feel it to be my privilege and my duty under Article 3 of that convention to say to you in a spirit of most earnest friendship that I should welcome an opportunity to act in the interest of European peace, either now or at any other time that might be thought more suitable, as an occasion to serve you and all concerned in a way that would afford me lasting cause for gratitude and happiness.
>
> WOODROW WILSON.§

The first answer came from Russia. M. Sazonov replied:

> Offer comes too late for Russia, should have been made earlier, Austria only country where it can help now.||

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* Page to Bryan, telegram, 31 July; US, p. 24. Grey to Barclay, 31 July; B 370.

† Bryan to W. H. Page, 1 August, telegram; US, p. 29. The limitation of the inquiry to London probably explains the subsequent statement of Herrick that he never received any acknowledgment of his suggestion which he thought had not been transmitted to the President. T. B. Mott, *Myron T. Herrick* (New York, 1929), p. 119.

‡ W. H. Page to Bryan, 3 August; US, p. 37.

§ Bryan to Penfield, Gerard, Wilson, W. H. Page and Herrick, telegrams, 4 August, 5 August; US, p. 42.

|| Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 6 August; US, p. 45. Later the Tsar expressed his

M. Poincaré declared that "the present circumstances give a new proof of that love of peace with which France is ever inspired," and continued:

> For its preservation, the Government has made every sacrifice compatible with its dignity and its honor. Notwithstanding repeated provocations and numerous violations of territory, it has refused to be the aggressor. It was attacked at the same time that the territory of neutral powers was being violated.*

King George V "expressed most earnestly his thanks . . . and the hope that an occasion would come when the President's offer of mediation might be accepted."† The Emperor Francis Joseph thanked the President for "his friendly message which corresponds entirely with the peaceful sentiments which have guided me during my entire reign," but added:

> Austria-Hungary will certainly accept with gratitude and in accord with its allies the mediation of your Government at such time as the honor of the flag will permit and when the objects of the war shall be attained.‡

The most interesting reply was that from the German Emperor. In the presence of the American ambassador, Mr. Gerard, he wrote out a long telegram in seven numbered paragraphs giving his version of the diplomatic negotiations preceding the war; for the rest he merely said, "I am most grateful for the President's message."§

"sincere thanks." "Russia," he said, "did not desire war and did everything to avoid it but from the moment this war was forced upon her she cannot fail to defend her rights by force of arms. Under these circumstances it seems for the moment premature to contemplate the possibility of peace." Wilson to Bryan, telegram, 26 August; US, pp. 78–79.

* Herrick to Bryan, telegram, 6 August; US, p. 48. Poincaré, V, 27, describes the American offer as a "proposal certainly well-intentioned, but timid and embarrassing."

† Page to Bryan, telegram, 7 August; US, p. 50. The King said to the ambassador, "My God, Mr. Page, what else could we do?" Hendrick, *Life and Letters of Walter H. Page*, I, 309. Grey was "most appreciative" and declared that Great Britain would "welcome mediation whenever a favorable time comes." Page to Bryan, telegram, 7 August; US, p. 50.

‡ Penfield to Bryan, telegram, 7 August; US, p. 50; A III 146, c.

§ Gerard to Bryan, telegram, 14 August; US, pp. 60–61. The Emperor's account of the negotiations, which was first published in J. W. Gerard, *My Four Years in*

Without exception, the replies made clear that mediation would not be welcome. One does not have to search long for the reasons. Each government, having proclaimed to its people and to the world that it had desired peace and had not been responsible for the war, was compelled, politically speaking, to continue the war in the hope of defeating and punishing its enemies; moreover, each government, declaring that it had been attacked, was in a position to realize certain national ambitions if the fortune of war went in its favor. The Germans, confident of victory, could not consider peace until their offensive had run its course, and the Entente Powers believed that ultimately their superior resources would enable them to achieve victory. In short, to discuss peace at the moment when the war had hardly begun, was out of the question for any belligerent. The Government of the United States was to offer its mediation more than once in the next two and a half years, only to discover that there was but one kind of effective mediation: armed intervention.

The crisis of July, 1914, was the most momentous event in the history of Europe since the Congress of Vienna a century before. If it culminated in a European war, this was partly because probably no diplomacy, however skilful, could have devised a compromise between the firm resolution of Austria-Hungary to make war on Serbia and the determination of Russia not to permit the crushing of that small state. But, as a matter of fact, much of the diplomacy exhibited was far from skilful. The Austro-Hungarian statesmen failed to foresee that Serbia might submit to their demands to so great an extent that their policy of war would be open to the charge of brutal aggression. The German Government, if it was to

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Germany (New York, 1917), pp. 200–202, is chiefly interesting because of his statement that Lichnowsky's report of Grey's warning on 29 July (not 30 July, as William says) was "directly counter to the King's message to me" (meaning what King George was supposed to have said to Prince Henry on 26 July to the effect that England would remain neutral), thus showing that the Emperor had been greatly influenced by the King's remark.

carry through its programme of localizing the war, needed to win the confidence of the Entente Powers in its professions of Austro-Hungarian disinterestedness; yet from the beginning it managed by its conduct to create only distrust and suspicion. The Russian diplomatists appear not to have appreciated sufficiently the probable effect of their military measures on the highly strung German general staff. The British cabinet found its action largely paralyzed because its members could not decide what course to take. The Germans miscalculated the attitude of Rumania, the Russians thought that they could dragoon Bulgaria to take their side, the British allowed themselves to be hoodwinked by Turkey. In one sense, therefore, Mr. Lloyd George was right when he exclaimed that the statesmen "staggered and stumbled" into the conflict. In another respect also diplomacy was found wanting. Although the immediate issue concerned only Austria-Hungary and Russia, the crisis was immediately viewed as a test of strength between the two rival groups of Powers, and it was the tragedy of Europe that among its many gifted statesmen there was no one of the caliber of a Canning or a Cavour to cut through the web of alliances and restore liberty of action to the states not directly interested.

In spite of all their failings, however, the diplomatists were not solely to blame for the failure to preserve peace. Back of them stood the public opinion of their respective countries which, as reflected in newspapers, urged a resolute stand and opposed concessions which might avert war; even in Great Britain, where the disposition to keep out of the struggle was undoubtedly very strong, the moment a direct British interest —Belgium—was threatened hesitation vanished. Perhaps a distinction should be made between the press and the people, for the masses, so far as their sentiments can be gauged, certainly did not welcome the war. Yet their resistance was passive: the occasional demonstrations for peace were easily dispersed, and their suppression evoked no resentment. In every country there was an instinctive feeling that the future, for an indefinite period, was at stake, that the nation which did not play its part would be outdistanced in the eternal competition of peoples, and that any sacrifice must be borne to insure the continuance of historic traditions. In the face of this intense nationalism, which had been born of the French Revolution and intensified by the events of the nineteenth century, pacific instincts, socialistic programmes, religious scruples and humanitarian ideals were of no avail.

APPENDIX

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914
Count Berchtold to Baron von Giesl, 20 July, 1914; *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges 1914*, I, no. 27; *Collected Diplomatic Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War* pp. 3–13.	Handed to Baron Giesl by M. Pashich. *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges 1914*, II, no. 47; *Les pourparlers diplomatiques, 16/29 juin–3/16 août 1914* (Serbian 'Blue Book'), no. 39; *Collected Diplomatic Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, pp. 31–37.	Annex to circular despatch to missions abroad; *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Weltkrieges 1914*, II, no. 96; *Collected Diplomatic Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War*, pp. 507–514.
On 31 March, 1909, the Serbian Minister in Vienna, on the instructions of the Serbian Government, made the following declaration to the Imperial and Royal Government: "Serbia recognizes that the *fait accompli* regarding Bosnia has not affected her rights, and consequently she will conform to the decisions that the Powers may take in conformity with Article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin. In deference to the advice of the Great Powers, Serbia undertakes to renounce from now onward the attitude of protest and opposition which she has adopted with regard to the annexation since last autumn. She undertakes, moreover, to modify the direction of her policy with regard to Austria-Hungary and to live in future on good neighborly terms with the latter."	The Royal Serbian Government has received the communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of the 10th instant, and is convinced that its reply will remove any misunderstanding which may threaten to impair the good neighborly relations between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Kingdom of Serbia.	
The history of recent years, and in particular the painful events of 28 June last, have shown the existence of a subversive movement with the object of detaching a part of the territories of Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy. The movement, which had its birth under the eye of the Serbian Government, has gone so far as to make itself manifest on both sides of the Serbian frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism and a series of outrages and murders.	Conscious of the fact that the protests which were made both from the tribune of the national Skupshtina and in the declarations and actions of the responsible representatives of the State—protests which were discontinued as a result of the declarations made by the Serbian Government on 18 [31] March, 1909—have not been renewed on any occasion as regards the great neighboring Monarchy, and that no attempt has been made since that time, either by	The Royal Serbian Government confines itself to the statement that no endeavor has been made by either the Serbian Government or its officers to modify the status of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the declaration of 18 March, 1909. Thereby it deliberately evades the basic point in our representations, as we have not asserted that the Serbian Government or its officers have officially undertaken anything to that end.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)
Far from carrying out the formal undertakings contained in the declaration of 31 March, 1909, the Royal Serbian Government has done nothing to repress these movements. It has permitted the criminal machinations of various societies and associations directed against the Monarchy, and has tolerated unrestrained language on the part of the press, the glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, and the participation of officers and functionaries in subversive agitation. It has permitted an unwholesome propaganda in public instruction, in short, it has permitted all manifestations of a nature to incite the Serbian population to hatred of the Monarchy and contempt of its institutions.	the successive Royal Governments or by their organs, to change the political and legal status created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Royal Government calls attention to the fact that in this connection the Imperial and Royal Government has made no representation, except one concerning a schoolbook, when the Imperial and Royal Government received an entirely satisfactory explanation. Serbia in numerous instances has given proofs of her pacific and moderate policy during the Balkan crisis, and it is due to Serbia and to the sacrifice that she has made in the exclusive interest of European peace that the same has been preserved.	Our grievance, however, is that the Serbian Government has omitted to suppress the agitation directed against the territorial integrity of the Dual Monarchy, notwithstanding the obligations it entered into under the terms of the above-mentioned note. The Serbian Government, therefore, was in duty bound to change the whole direction of its policy and to establish good neighborly relations with Austria-Hungary; and not merely to refrain from official attempts to dispute the status of Bosnia as an integral part of the Dual Monarchy.
This culpable tolerance of the Royal Serbian Government had not ceased at the moment when the events of 28 June last proved its fatal consequences to the whole world.	The Royal Government cannot be held responsible for manifestations of a private character, such as articles in the press and the peaceable work of societies —manifestations which take place in nearly all countries in the ordinary course of events, and which as a general rule are beyond official control. The Royal Government is all the less responsible, in view of the fact that at the time of the solution of a series of questions which arose between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, it showed much consideration and thus succeeded in settling most of these questions to the mutual advantage of the two neighboring countries.	The contention of the Royal Serbian Government that utterances of the press and the activities of associations have a private character and are beyond the control of the state, is plainly at variance with the institutions of modern states, even of those which have the most liberal regulations in this respect; these regulations are part of the public law and impose state supervision upon both press and associations. Moreover, the Serbian institutions themselves provide for such supervision. The charge against the Serbian Government is that it completely failed to supervise the Serbian press and associations, although it well knew that both were engaged in a campaign against the Monarchy.
It results from the depositions and confessions of the criminal perpetrators of the outrage of 28 June that the Sarajevo assassinations were planned in Belgrade; that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided had been given to them by Serbian officers and functionaries belonging to the *Narodna Odbrana;* and finally,	For these reasons the Royal Government has been painfully surprised by the allegations that citizens of the Kingdom of Serbia have participated in the preparations for the crime committed at Sarajevo; the Royal Government had expected to be invited to collaborate in an investigation of all that concerns this crime, and it stood ready,	This assertion is incorrect. The Serbian Government had been fully informed of the suspicion raised against certain designated persons, and therefore was not only in a position spontaneously to institute an investigation, but was even bound to do so by its own laws. It has done nothing at all in this respect.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)
that the passage into Bosnia of the criminals and their arms was organized and effected by the chiefs of the Serbian frontier service. The above-mentioned results of the magistrates' investigation do not permit the Austro-Hungarian Government to pursue any longer the attitude of expectant forbearance which they have maintained for years in face of the machinations hatched in Belgrade, and thence propagated in the territories of the Monarchy. The results, on the contrary, impose on them the duty of putting an end to the intrigues which form a perpetual menace to the tranquillity of the Monarchy.	in order to prove the entire correctness of its attitude, to take measures against any persons concerning whom representations might be made to it.	
To achieve this end the Imperial and Royal Government sees itself compelled to demand from the Royal Serbian Government a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy, in other words, the whole series of tendencies, the ultimate aim of which is to detach from the Monarchy territories belonging to it, and that it undertake to suppress by every means this criminal and terrorist propaganda. In order to give a formal character to this undertaking the Royal Serbian Government shall publish on the first page of the *Official Journal* of 13/26 July the following declaration:	Complying with the desire of the Imperial and Royal Government, it is prepared to commit for trial any Serbian subject, regardless of his station or rank, of whose complicity in the crime of Sarajevo proofs shall be produced, and more especially it undertakes to publish on the first page of the *Official Journal* of 13/26 July the following declaration:	
"The Royal Government of Serbia condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary, *i. e.*, the general tendency of which the ultimate aim is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal activities.	"The Royal Government of Serbia condemns all propaganda which may be directed against Austria-Hungary, *i. e.*, the general tendency of which the ultimate aim is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal activities.	Our demand read as follows: "The Royal Government of Serbia condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary . . ." The alteration made by the Royal Serbian Government in the declaration demanded by us implies either that such a propaganda against Austria-Hungary does not exist, or that its existence is not within the knowledge of the Royal Government. This formula is insincere and equivocal; it is intended to furnish

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*
		the Serbian Government with a loophole for future emergencies. The Serbian Government might, in future, interpret this declaration as neither a disavowal of the existing propaganda, nor an admission of its hostility to the Monarchy; it might, furthermore, base thereon the claim that it is not bound to suppress any future propaganda similar to the present one.
"The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries participated in the above-mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighborly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of 31 March, 1909.	"The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries have participated, according to the communication of the Imperial and Royal Government, in the above-mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighborly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of 31 March, 1909.	The wording of our demand was: "The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries have participated in . . ." By the additional phrase, "according to the communication from the Imperial and Royal Government," the Royal Serbian Government seeks, as indicated above, to keep a free hand for the future.
"The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it its duty formally to warn officers and functionaries, and the whole population of the kingdom, that henceforth it will proceed with the utmost vigor against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress."	"The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it its duty formally to warn officers and functionaries, and the whole population of the kingdom, that henceforth it will proceed with the utmost vigor against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress."	
This declaration shall simultaneously be brought to the knowledge of the Royal Army in an order of the day by His Majesty the King and shall be published in the official bulletin of the Army.	This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the Royal Army in an order of the day, in the name of His Majesty the King, by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next official bulletin of the army.	
The Royal Serbian Government further undertakes:	The Royal Government further undertakes:	We had demanded:
1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hun-	1. To insert, at the first regular convocation of the Skupshtina, a provision into the press	The suppression of "any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-

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garian Monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity;	law for the most severe punishment of incitement to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and for taking action against any publication the general tendency of which is directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary. The government engages, at the impending revision of the constitution, to add to Article 22 of the constitution an amendment permitting such publications to be confiscated, a proceeding at present impossible according to the categorical provisions of Article 22 of the constitution.	Hungarian Monarchy, and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity." We thus wished to establish Serbia's obligation to provide for the prevention of such press attacks in the future; we wished, therefore, to secure definite results in the present instance. Serbia, instead, offers to enact certain laws intended to serve as means to that purpose, to wit: (a) A law providing individual punishment of above-mentioned press utterances hostile to the Dual Monarchy. This is all the more immaterial to us, as it is a notorious fact that individual prosecution of press offenses is very rarely possible, and as, furthermore, the lax application of such a law would leave unpunished even the few cases that might be prosecuted. This proposal, therefore, in no way meets our demand, as it gives no guarantee whatever for the results desired by us. (b) An addition to Article 22 of the constitution which would permit confiscation—a proposal which likewise cannot satisfy us, as the existence of such a law in Serbia is of no avail to us, but only a pledge by the Government to apply it. This, however, has not been promised to us. These proposals are, therefore, quite unsatisfactory, all the more so because they are also evasive, as they do not state the time within which these laws shall be enacted. Besides, no provision is made for the event of a rejection of the bills by the Skupshtina—not to mention a possible resignation of the cabinet—in which case matters would remain unchanged.
2. To dissolve immediately the society styled *Narodna Odbrana*, to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against other societies and their branches in Serbia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hun-	2. The government possesses no proof, nor does the note of the Imperial and Royal Government furnish it with any, that the *Narodna Odbrana* and other similar societies have committed up to the present any criminal act of this nature through the	The propaganda against the Monarchy conducted by the *Narodna Odbrana* and its affiliated associations permeates the entire public life of Serbia; the Serbian Government's declaration that it knows nothing about this propaganda, is, therefore,

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914 (*Continued*)
garian Monarchy. The Royal Government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form;	proceedings of any of their members. Nevertheless, the Royal Government will accept the demands of the Imperial and Royal Government and will dissolve the *Narodna Odbrana* society and every other association which may be directing its efforts against Austria-Hungary.	an absolutely inadmissible act of evasion. Setting this contention aside, our demand is not wholly met, as we have also demanded: The confiscation of the means of propaganda of these societies. The prevention of the reorganization of the dissolved societies under other names and in other guise. These two points the Cabinet of Belgrade ignores, thus eliminating even the guarantee which the preceding half-promise would imply that the proposed dissolution would put an end, once for all, to the activities of the societies hostile to the Dual Monarchy, and especially of the *Narodna Odbrana.*
3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the teaching-staff and also as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary;	3. The Royal Serbian Government undertakes to remove without delay from public instruction in Serbia all that serves or could serve to foment propaganda against Austria-Hungary, whenever the Imperial and Royal Government shall furnish it with facts and proofs of such a propaganda.	In this case also, the Serbian Government first demands proofs that a propaganda against the Monarchy is being carried on in Serbia's public instruction; this, too, when the Serbian Government must know that the books in use in Serbian schools contain much objectionable matter, and that a large number of the Serbian teachers are connected with the *Narodna Odbrana* and its affiliated associations. The Serbian Government has again in this instance failed to comply with our demand in the way indicated by us, inasmuch as the phrase, "both as regards the teaching staff and also as regards the methods of instruction," has been omitted—an addition which shows quite clearly where the propaganda against the Monarchy in the Serbian schools is to be looked for.
4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the Royal Government;	4. The Royal Government also agrees to remove from the military and the civil service all such persons as the judicial inquiry may have proved to be guilty of acts directed against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and it expects the Imperial and Royal Government to com-	If the dismissal of the military officers and civil officials referred to from the government service should be conditional upon their guilt being first confirmed by means of a trial, the Serbian Government restricts its acceptance of our demand to cases where persons are charged with having committed a crime pun-

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	municate to it at a later day the names and the acts of these officers and officials for the purposes of the proceedings which are to be taken against them.	ishable under the provisions of the penal code. Since we, however, demanded the removal of officers and officials who carry on a propaganda hostile to the Monarchy, which does not in general constitute an offense punishable by law in Serbia, our demand on this point also appears not to have been met.
5. To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government for the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Monarchy;	5. The Royal Government must confess that it does not clearly understand the meaning or the scope of the demand made by the Imperial and Royal Government that Serbia shall undertake to accept the collaboration of officials of the Imperial and Royal Government upon Serbian territory, but it declares that it will admit such collaboration as agrees with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighborly relations.	International law has just as little to do with this question as criminal procedure; this is purely a problem of state policing to be settled by a special mutual arrangement. Serbia's reservation is, therefore, unintelligible and, on account of its vague and undefined form, is likely to give rise to insurmountable difficulties in the attainment of a final settlement.
6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of 28 June who are on Serbian territory; delegates of the Austro-Hungarian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto;	6. It goes without saying that the Royal Government considers it a duty to begin an inquiry against all such persons as are, or possibly may be, implicated in the plot of 15/28 June, and who may happen to be within the territory of the kingdom. As regards the participation in this inquiry of Austro-Hungarian agents or authorities appointed for this purpose by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept such an arrangement, as it would constitute a violation of the constitution and of the law of criminal procedure; nevertheless, in concrete cases communications as to the results of the investigation in question might be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents.	Our demand was perfectly clear and could not be misunderstood. We demanded: 1. The institution of a judicial inquiry against those who participated in the plot. 2. The co-operation of Austro-Hungarian officials in the inquiry (*recherches*, in contradistinction to *enquête judiciaire*). We did not contemplate the participation of Austro-Hungarian officials in the Serbian judicial proceedings; these officials were only to co-operate in the preliminary police investigation, which was to seek out and collect the data for the judicial inquiry. If the Serbian Government misunderstands us, it has done so intentionally, since it must be familiar with the difference between an *enquête judiciaire* and simple *recherches*. Since the Serbian Government wishes to evade every form of control in connection with the proposed investigation which, if correctly conducted, would lead to results highly un-

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		desirable for it, and since it has no plausible grounds for declining the co-operation of our officials in the police preliminaries,—a police intervention for which there are a great number of precedents—it has adopted a contention designed to furnish an apparent justification of its refusal to comply with our demand and to make our demand appear impossible of acceptance.
7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Major Voya Tankosich and of the individual named Milan Tsiganovich, a Serbian state employee, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial inquiry at Sarajevo;	7. The Royal Government proceeded on the very evening of the delivery of the note, to arrest Commandant Voyslav Tankosich. As regards Milan Tsiganovich, who is a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and who up to 15 June was employed (on probation) by the directorate of railways, it has not yet been possible to find out his whereabouts. Notices for his apprehension have been published in the press. The Austro-Hungarian Government is requested to be so good as to supply as soon as possible, in the customary form, the presumptive evidence of guilt as well as the possible proofs of guilt which have been collected up to the present time, at the investigation at Sarajevo, for the purposes of the subsequent inquiry.	This reply is equivocal. Our investigations have shown that Tsiganovich took a leave of absence three days after the assassination, when it became known that he had participated in the plot; and that under orders from the Belgrade police department he proceeded to Ribari. It is, therefore, untrue that Tsiganovich had retired from the Government's service as early as 15/28 June. In addition, it should be stated that the chief of the Belgrade police, who himself had caused Tsiganovich's departure and knew his whereabouts, stated in an interview that no person of the name of Milan Tsiganovich existed in Belgrade.
8. To prevent by effective measures the co-operation of the Serbian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Shabats and Lozhnitsa guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Sarajevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier;	8. The Serbian Government will reinforce and extend the measures which have been taken for suppressing the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier. It goes without saying that the Serbian Government will immediately order an inquiry and will severely punish the frontier officials on the Shabats-Lozhnitsa line who have failed in their duty and allowed the authors of the crime of Sarajevo to pass.	
9. To furnish the Imperial and Royal Government with explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Ser-	9. The Royal Government will gladly furnish explanations of the remarks made by its officials, whether in Serbia or	The interviews here referred to must be well known to the Serbian Government. The request that the Austro-Hungari-

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*	THE SERBIAN REPLY, 25 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*	COMMENTS OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT, 28 JULY, 1914 *(Continued)*
bian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official position, have not hesitated since the crime of 28 June to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian Government; and, finally,	abroad, in interviews after the crime, and which, according to the statement of the Imperial and Royal Government, were hostile to the Monarchy, as soon as the Imperial and Royal Government shall have communicated to it the passages in question in these remarks, and as soon as it shall have shown that the remarks were actually made by the said officials, in connection with which the Royal Government itself will take steps to collect evidence.	an Government furnish details concerning these interviews, and the fact that the Serbian Government reserves the exclusive right to conduct the formal investigation in this matter, prove that on this point, as on others, Serbia has no serious intention of acceding to our demands.
10. To notify the Imperial and Royal Government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.	10. The Royal Government will inform the Imperial and Royal Government of the execution of the measures comprised under the above heads, in so far as this has not already been done by the present note, as soon as each measure shall have been ordered and carried out.	
The Austro-Hungarian Government expect the reply of the Royal Government at the latest by 6 o'clock on Saturday evening, 25 July.	If the Imperial and Royal Government is not satisfied with this reply the Serbian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to take precipitate action in the solution of this question, is ready, as always, to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring this question to the decision of the International Tribunal at The Hague, or to the Great Powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Serbian Government on the 18/31 March, 1909. Belgrade, 12/25 July, 1914.	
A memorandum dealing with the results of the magisterial inquiry at Sarajevo with regard to the officials mentioned under heads (7) and (8) is attached to this note. ANNEX The criminal inquiry opened by the Court of Sarajevo against Gavrilo Printsip and his accessories in and before the act of assassination committed by them		

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN NOTE TO SERBIA, 23 JULY, 1914

(*Continued*)

on the 28 June last has up to the present led to the following conclusions:

1. The plot, having as its object the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand at the time of his visit to Sarajevo, was formed at Belgrade by Gavrilo Printsip, Nedelyko Chabrinovich, one Milan Tsiganovich and Trifko Grabezh, with the assistance of Major Voya Tankosich.

2. The six bombs and the four Browning pistols and ammunition with which the guilty parties committed the act were delivered to Printsip, Chabrinovich, and Grabezh by the man Milan Tsiganovich and Major Voya Tankosich at Belgrade.

3. The bombs are hand-grenades coming from the arms depôt of the Serbian army at Kraguyevats.

4. In order to insure the success of the act, Tsiganovich taught Printsip, Chabrinovich and Grabezh how to use the bombs, and gave lessons in firing Browning pistols to Printsip and Grabezh in a forest near the shooting ground at Topchider.

5. To enable Printsip, Chabrinovich, and Grabezh to cross the frontier of Bosnia-Herzegovina and smuggle in their contraband of arms secretly, a secret system of transport was organized by Tsiganovich.

By this arrangement the introduction into Bosnia-Herzegovina of criminals and their arms was effected by the officials controlling the frontiers at Shabats (Rade Popovich) and Lozhnitsa, as well as by the customs officer Rudivoy Grbich, of Lozhnitsa, with the assistance of various individuals.

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